

APRIL/75¢

The **NEWS-
LETTER**
Inyo
and
Mono

**MAMMOTH RV
PARK HASSLE**



Manzanita tenants'
lawyer Sandra Medina
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Spring!
...but it's not all roses.
P.14

DWP plays while Inyo pays



WINING AND DINING
SOME INYO FRIENDS
DOCUMENTED - P.38

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COVER:

Spring at Big Pine: As her excited four-year-old, John, gawks expectantly, a young mother, Barbara Burell, runs to get his kite sailing aloft.

Photo: John Heston



A News Alternative Eastern Sierra News Service

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Patricia Duncan

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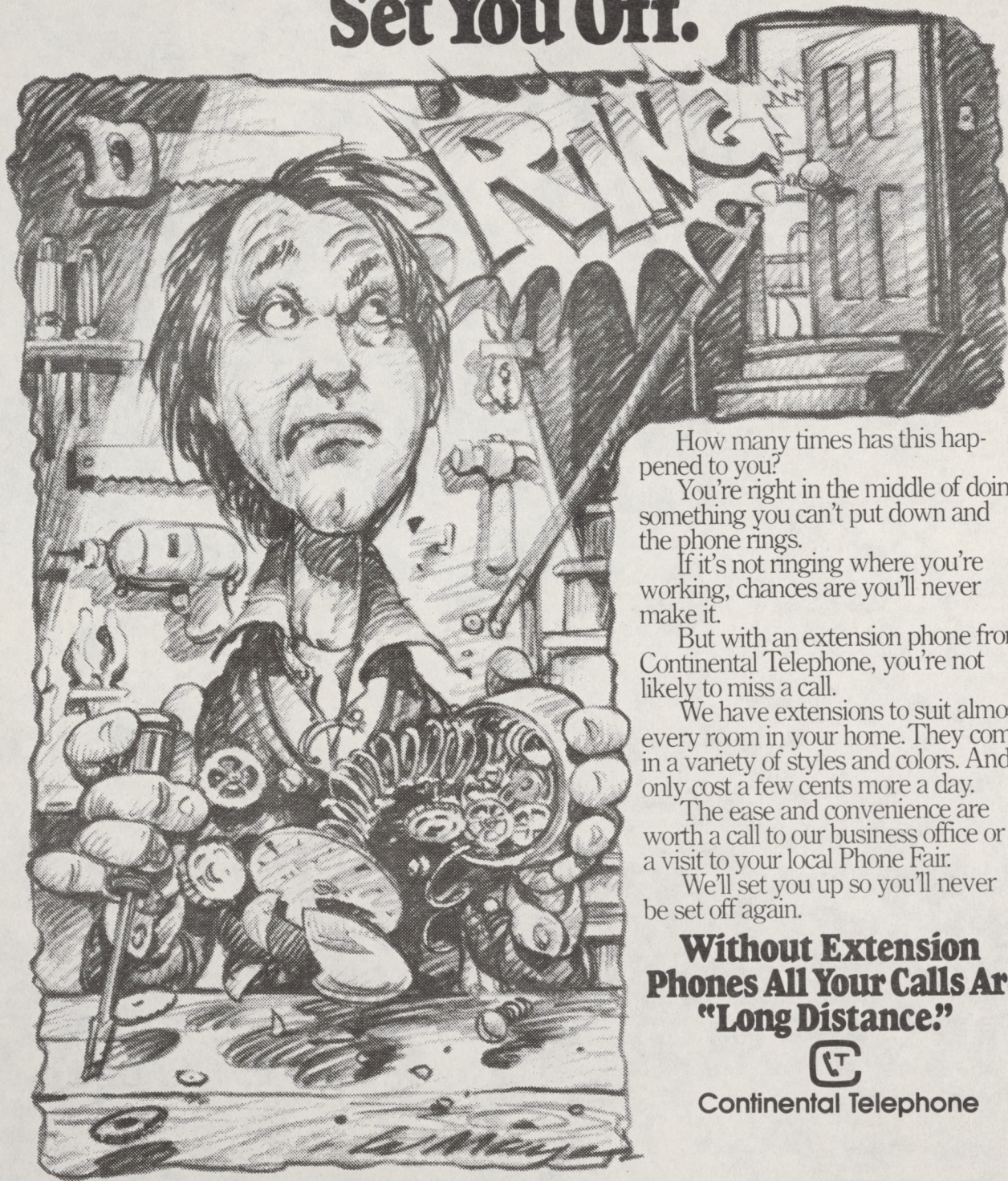
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B.K. wouldn't buy the water systems; she wants the hired help to run them on Inyo's terms.

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The News-Letter welcomes readers' letters and comments relevant to public issues. Letters should be brief and concisely stated. The editors remind readers that publication of a letter does not necessarily imply either the editor's agreement with its content, or its accuracy. Address letters to PO Box 531, Independence, California 93526.

John Heston, editor

THE FORBES PHOTOS: A SON'S RESPONSE

Dear Sirs -

I wish to apologize for my delay in writing to you to express my appreciation for the fine article you published concerning my father. Mrs. Forbes and I thought that "Wandering Photographer" was very well done. We thank you.

I hope to drive through Independence sometime during the next few months and shall try to arrange some time so that I could meet you folks.

Do give our regards to Stan Hays.

J. McLaren Forbes
Reno, Nevada

ON PARENTHOOD: RECOMMENDED READING

Editor -

To be a better Parent:

We have to strive and study to attain perfection as a person, as mother and father. We

may not attain perfection, but we can try thereby being better tomorrow than we are today.

So that children can grow up with a good feeling and identify with their role as a future man or woman, father or mother. I suggest an addition to the family home evening lesson, the *Mother Education series* in the *Relief Society manual*. It need not be in the presence of the children.

In this, the 1979-80 manual, the following subjects are covered:

When You Feel Overwhelmed as a Mother

When Children's Behavior Is Disturbing

Building a Child's Self-esteem

Dealing With Anger

Teaching Children About

Physical Maturity

Male and Female Created He Them (This one I read and recommend it especially.)

Sacred Rules of Conduct

Helping Children Withstand Temptation

Praise and Constructive Criticism

Each Child Is Unique

Parents As Partners

I don't know how I ever raised a family without these aids to parenting. I could have done it so much better.

See also a church movie "Cipher in the Snow" - all parents and teachers should see this one.

WHERE WERE THE BOSSES WHEN THE TROUBLE STARTED?

Eastern Sierra News Service -

It might be pointed out in your News-Letter that on Tuesday morning, March 11 at the Board of Supervisors' meeting (were you there?), Jim Wickser was taking down notes - and told one of the people near him in the audience that he'd just started for his front door for a day of skiing at Mammoth when a phone call from Duane George-son had come with instructions he was to be at the supervisors' meeting when the ground water pumping ordinance was up for discussion.

One wonders why, instead of skiing, he shouldn't have been in Lone Pine where the water

Continued next page

NEWS-LETTER'S CANDIDATE-COLUMNISTS

Newspeople, like businessmen, professional people, actors, mechanics, butchers, bakers and candlestick makers, sometimes go into politics. Taken in mixed-bag lots news people are intelligent, articulate, well-informed and mostly honest. They make good officeholders and also very bad officeholders - just like anybody else.

Perhaps it is their constant and ongoing exposure to the workings - and the non-workings - of government that sometimes causes newspeople to develop social and political consciences. They see what could be done in government, and compare it with what is actually done, and they get all riled up. That part is understandable.

Some of them just remain newsmen, appalled observers of things that bother them. Others finally decide to run for office. Still others want to do both: run for office and also remain newsmen, hoping to manage two hats.

And so it is with two of News-Letter's columnists, Wally Charleston of Mammoth Lakes who is running for a supervisor's seat in Mono County, and now (a new addition to News-Letter's pages) W. Paul Payne of Keeler who for a number of years has been a contributing writer for the local newspapers. Paul has announced his candidacy as an Inyo supervisor.

Conflict of interest? You bet.

That is, unless it can be handled in a certain way; a way that is fair to all concerned.

News-Letter does not wish to discontinue the contributions of two columnists it respects; talent is not all that easy to find. But News-Letter does not wish to

be unfair to other candidates by allowing its candidate-columnists to get a lion's share of what the media people and politicians have come to call "exposure."

News-Letter's editor has therefore decided to handle it this way: Continue the columns, one of which has only just begun, and advise the candidates, for now, to lay off their comments and coverage of issues likely to turn up in the local elections. News-Letter has also advised them that this publication does not necessarily endorse or support them as candidates, pointing out that in fact they hold at least a few opinions which we may privately or publicly oppose. That does not rule out our possible support in the voting booths if they were running in our district, which they are not.

And what if one or both of them wins? There is in fact a very good chance that could happen; each in his own way seems at least to be as qualified as anybody else. So in the case of a candidate-columnist victory, News-Letter will be very happy to continue publishing their columns - and will also be just as happy to put them up there on the hot-seat with every other official, closely watched and carefully questioned.

Would News-Letter ever come out in support of a newsman for public office? Yes.

That is of course if he happens to be Walter Cronkite and if he chose to run against Jimmy Carter or that other fellow, the Class B movie actor.

- The editor

was being turned off!

Anyway, he got his "notes" on the county's proposed ordinance down to the jolly old DWP lawyer in L.A. so they could start organizing their opposition to the ordinance.

The DWP's chief local engineer was going skiing on this important Tuesday, that he was forced to give up his fun, deserves news coverage, I think.

Polly Connable
Independence

(Editor's note: News-Letter is not unaware of DWP's penchant for amusement while Inyoans foot the bills and suffer meters and excessive power bills. See Notes from B.K. and also a story about DWP's L.A. party.)

BILL THORNBURGH: A TRIBUTE IN VERSE

Dear Benett -

We thoroughly enjoy the News-Letter. It just isn't published often enough.

Perhaps you can use this poem written by our daughter, in your next issue. We think she writes lovely poems, but of course we are slightly prejudiced. It does express the way a lot of us feel.

Patricia E. Benbrook
Cartago

For Bill

The warmth of the sun was in
him!
The shine from the stars in his
eyes,
And all the beauty in the country,
Was in this special guy!

He was a man of deep devotion.
Full of laughter, full of
smiles,
And always had the time to talk
to you,
If only for awhile.

He always took the time to care,
To help a fellow friend.
For the Tragedy that has happened,
Our hearts, they will not mend!

Some say he was just a rancher,
But to us, he was a whole lot
more.

To us he was Bill Thornburgh,
who we will always love and
adore!

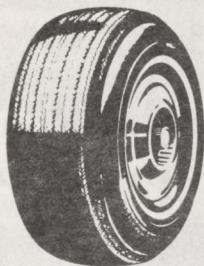
—Bonnie K. Stockman

(Editor's note: News-Letter is grateful to Ms. Benbrook for her note and for the poetic tribute to the late rancher.)

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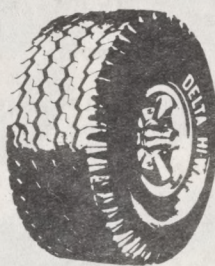
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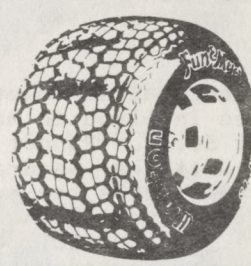
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News Briefs

Resolution of the Manzanita Trailer Park Question could have long-term effects on Mammoth's housing problem - but the Forest Service wants an RV park

At Mammoth, a nagging housing problem began to shape up as a class struggle. A pervasive establishment view - "Let them live in tents" - has so far prevailed. And a spunky young planner wants to bring it all to light before that burgeoning community moves unconsciously into a housing situation that could severely damage the stability of the local economy.

The planner is Randy Pestor, a director of IMAGE (Inyo-Mono Agency of Governmental Entities), and he had suggested that a technical advisory group of IMAGE meet on the Manzanita Trailer Park issue (see box). And also to examine low-cost housing in general in the Mammoth area.

Pestor called together the parties involved in Manzanita: Forest Service Ranger Dick Adams, Attorney Sandra Madina (who represents the trailer park tenants), and the Manzanita owners. The advisory board is made up of representatives of a number of government agencies.

Pestor opened the meeting by saying that the proposed Manzanita closure is "causing problems on the housing crunch here in Mammoth, and the mobile home park is one of the few low-cost housing facilities in the area."

But early in the session, held at USFS headquarters, Dick Adams made his point. He said, "I think the issue here is more than just Manzanita Trailer Park. I think the issue is basically low-cost housing. I think that at the present time, Manzanita Trailer Park is just the focal point for that total problem - worker housing." He volunteered the Forest Service is lending assistance in the problem by "contemplating allowing" the Mammoth Mountain Ski area to build 300 to 500 units to "handle transient employees for the Mountain."

Adams added that providing seasonal housing for a transient work force does not alleviate the total problem because the "community itself is going to have to find a solution for low-cost housing." He said he'd recently spent some time in other ski areas with similar growth problems. "We're headed down the same path...or they've gone down a path we're now going down. They have not found solutions to their low-cost housing problems. It's rather a sad situation and

I think that Mammoth has to face up to the problems of low-cost housing."

Pestor asked Adams: "Is there any area where the Forest Service requires, prior to giving any kind of permit for any expansion for ski facilities, would also require that the county provide more low-cost housing? Does the Forest Service have any experience in doing that at all?"

Adams said the Forest Service doesn't get into the business of telling counties how to run its private lands. "And, I'm not sure the town of Bishop wants to become the bedroom community for the town of Mammoth's work force."

Adams referred to the Mono Plan. He read a statement dealing specifically with Manzanita Trailer Park:

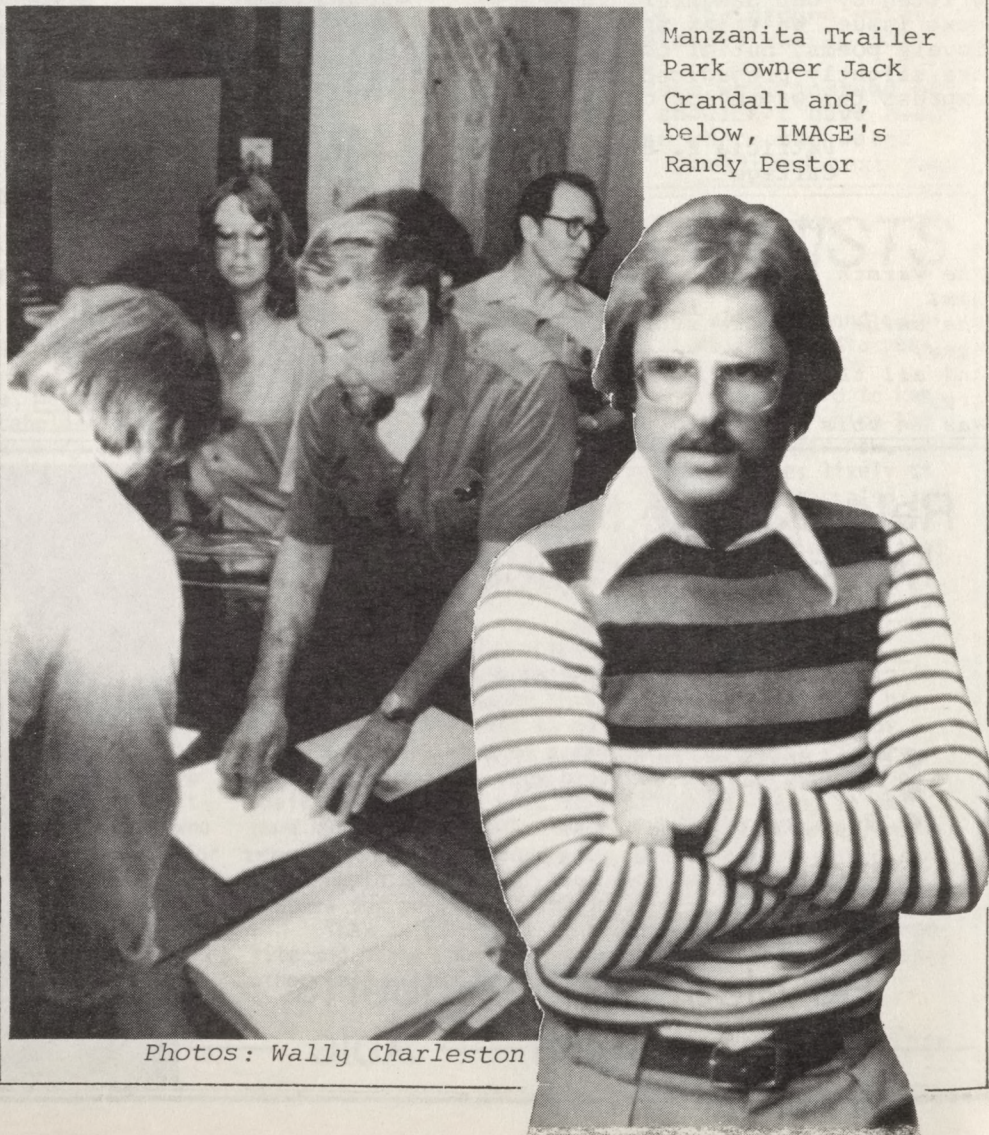
"A third goal called for the relocation of the mobile home

park. Mobile homes have been historically treated as social outcasts in most communities in re: relegated to areas less desirable for other uses. Mammoth has the opportunity to integrate this element into the community while removing residential uses from the entrance to the Village. The importance of these mobile homes as necessary housing units in the local market is detailed in Section eight of the Mono Plan."

That plan was completed in late 1975. Nothing so far has been done to contend with approaching problems of low-cost housing until recently when the trailer park issue made it a focal point.

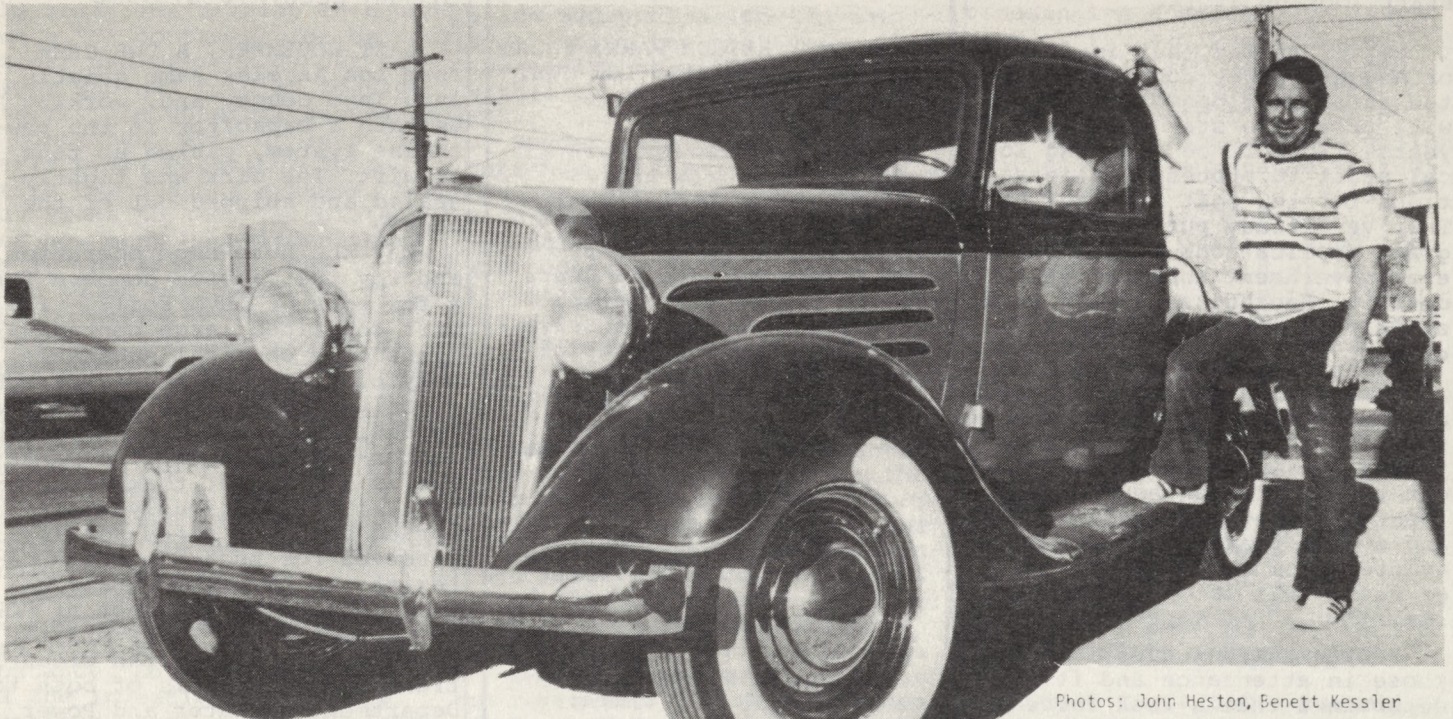
Trailer Park owner Crandall offered, "When this first came up, (former District Ranger) Dick Austin told us they were

Manzanita Trailer Park owner Jack Crandall and, below, IMAGE's Randy Pestor



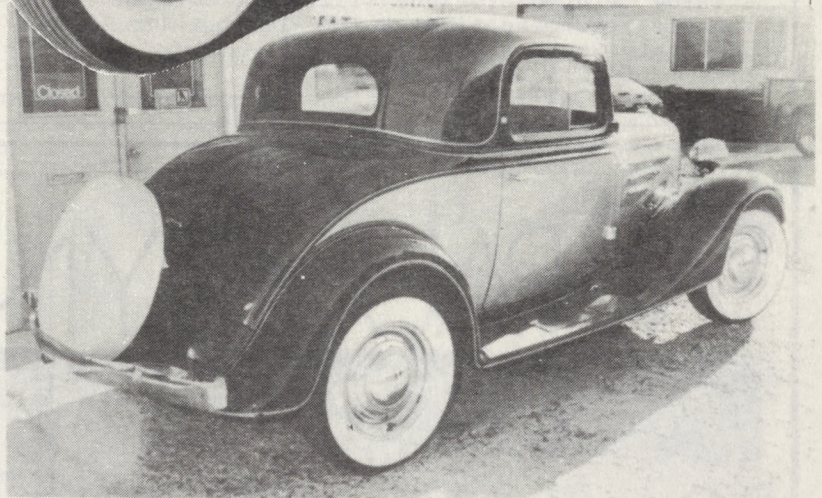
Photos: Wally Charleston

JAZZY LITTLE '35 CHEVY



Photos: John Heston, Benett Kessler

Back in 1935 this little coupe could have been bought for a few hundred dollars, its total cost probably less than half the amount that has gone into it lately. Last month it stood gleaming outside a Bishop upholstery shop where new velour coverings were tailored for its seat, doors and ceiling. Color: teal blue to match its blue-grey exterior and pinstriping. Owner Dick Jackson is one of the area's top body men, employed at Bishop's Green Motors Body Shop. "I'll probably drive it around town," says Jackson, a collector of old vintage goodies including a carriage and a Model A pickup.



going to relocate our trailer park because of the Mono Plan. I asked, 'Who's going to pay for this?' He says, 'Well, you are, or course.' I says, 'You have to be out of your mind. You're talking about a million dollars. Where can I get a million dollars to relocate the trailer park?' When I refused, then I became a 'non-conforming use'."

Adams said it was unfortunate a mechanism wasn't provided in the Mono Plan for the removal.

In the final analysis the Forest Service and Crandall were looking at nine options. Crandall chose, (with a slightly twisted arm) the "phasing out in 15 years" plan. In that time, the trailers would be phased out and it would become an RV Park.

Crandall cited the problem of getting the RV's off the Mountain. "They don't come to Manzanita - they go everywhere in town." He has not had more than fifteen RV spaces filled at one time all season.

Adams suggested: "the town has to be educated." He thought "the town should take some action" to put the RV's in a facility constructed for them. He stated it was unfortunate the supervisor of the District was not in attendance to offer assistance. In fact none of the Mono Supervisors were there. But, Inyo Supervisor Dick Engel was there.

Crandall revealed that his plans at the present call for 120 RV spaces in the park, in the coming year. Saunas and streamlining of the facilities

are planned.

Pestor said, "If you're having a phase-out of the Manzanita Trailer Park and I understand 22 units have already been moved out of there, it would have been nice that prior to any units being evicted, we could have made an arrangement to use some programs for low-cost housing so that former residents of the area would have the first priority of moving into the new units or that you have an RV park adjacent to the existing mobile home park. That's the kind of direction I'd like to see this go into today - so we can come up with some options and some alternatives to deal with the issue."

Adams, holding to his position, stated there are 2½ years until the next phase-out period

on the trailer park. He suggested now is a "proper time to start looking at it."

Pestor stated that in July or August, eight consultants for the rural development program will arrive to stay for two years. "They'll be training local staff to process applications for low-cost housing. They've already put in their grant applications to the federal government and the residents of Manzanita Trailer Park are already part of that application."

Summarizing for Adams, Pestor argued, "I've given you all the figures and that's why we contacted you two months ago...to get the figures on how many residents - elderly - children - and so on, that could well be evicted from the Manzanita Trailer Park. That is our first priority..."

Pestor asked suggestions from those in attendance and it was determined that a task force on the issue be appointed. He will bring his recommendations to the Mono County Board of Supervisors

MANZANITA TRAILER PARK, FOCAL POINT OF MAMMOTH'S, LOW-COST HOUSING ISSUE

Manzanita Trailer Park includes 12 acres and 75 mobile homes. The present owner of the park, Jack Crandall, was ordered by the Forest Service 16 years ago to expand its operation. He did so. The Forest Service now takes the position that the mobile home park is a non-conforming use. The Forest Service no longer wants families there and has ordered it to be converted to a recreation vehicle use. Twenty-two of the 75 units have already been evicted. Another 53 will be evicted in the future.

The park provides one of the few low-cost housing areas in the Mammoth Lakes community. It has operated under a Forest Service permit since 1952.

DEADLY CHEMICAL IN EASTERN SIERRA ELECTRIC SYSTEMS

LAST NOVEMBER, A DWP CREW from Los Angeles came quietly into Inyo County and, working beneath a capacitor in the powerline system, picked up tons of dirt. The dirt was tightly sealed and shipped out of the county.

Why the hush-hush operation and why the careful concern for a few tons of Inyo soil? - The dirt contained large contaminations of a chemical substance, polychlorinate bethenal, or PCB.

Only recently has PCB become recognized as a highly dangerous cancer-causing agent. So dangerous is it, in fact, that for disposal it is cautiously transported to waste sites usually reserved for such dangerous materials as radioactive waste. The threatening presence of PCB is no new thing. It is practically everywhere in the electric transmission systems of both the Department of Water and Power and the Southern California Edison company which serve the Inyo-Mono area. In recent months however, the threat was brought to light in an investigation in

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INYO SUPERVISOR, DISTRICT 5 / Vote June 3

the southland and it was revealed that in cases of fire or explosion - or from the leaks that will sometimes develop in equipment - PCB contamination becomes a clear and present danger to anyone who may come in contact with it. The chemical substance is contained, more or less, in nearly every capacitor in the entire DWP and SCE systems. Nobody seems to know immediately just how many capacitors there are in the area. But one fact of which power officials are becoming increasingly aware, and to which they are devoting more concerned attention, is the fact that the area's capacitors are getting old, that some of them are subject to leaks and or damage that might break them open. When that occurs - and it is a seldom occurrence - contamination can be spread for many feet around the mishap.

When PCB was first used it was thought to be an "ideal" - that is to say non-flammable - substance. But recent studies, and the investigation in the southland, have revealed alarming contradictions to that early belief.

Roy Snyder is DWP's director of electrical operations in the Owens Valley. He said that practically "every" capacitor in the

local systems is filled with PCB. Snyder said DWP will implement a plan to replace every capacitor in the area during the next year. The new equipment will be filled with a type of oil rather than PCB.

Snyder said that the capacitors now existing are subject to regular inspection, an indication that danger is presently minimal. The replacement project was budgeted shortly after the investigation turned up the unpleasant facts down south.

What is the immediate danger? Apparently not much. The valley and the southland have after all lived with the capacitors for years. Said Snyder: "I've never seen any harm caused by it, but it might be a matter of long exposure." He said that many capacitors exist in Los Angeles, but that those will not be immediately replaced. Too costly. But they will be "monitored" frequently.

Why then the sudden attention to replacement in Inyo? Answered Snyder: "This is a watershed, a very valuable watershed, and we won't take any chances of contaminating it."

Southern California Edison's Chuck Miller was also contacted for comment on the PCB problem.

"We're very much aware of it. There are some PCB capacitors here, but the new ones don't contain the chemical. There is regular visual inspection and we are replacing old equipment." Miller said there was a PCB spill "in December." He said that in that case about a gallon of the deadly substance leaked from a capacitor in a field off Highway 6 north of Bishop. In that case the earth around the area was "dug up and shipped out." That spill was the first of its kind "in years," he said.

Has cancer been definitely linked to PCB contamination? Miller would say that cancer was detected only in a "few long-term studies."

But nobody is denying the dangers of the stuff - as evidenced by L.A.'s protective reaction to its watershed.

DWP FIGHTS BACK AS COUNTY, STATE CRACK DOWN

HOPING TO DEFEAT a recently-imposed APCD rule, the Department of Water and Power has filed an action against the Great Basin Air Pollution Control District.

It was a tough rule: #216 which requires DWP to apply for

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permits for all of its groundwater pumping activities... To get such a permit, DWP would have to submit a favorable air quality analysis, not an easy task in the dusty desert created here.

DWP refused to apply for such a permit, and took its case to the Alpine County Court. The case, says APCD, failed to comply with CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act). In that it failed to determine beforehand the possible impact of implementing such a rule.

DWP's action came as a kind of retaliation; after APCD Director Chuck Fryxell and an Inyo deputy district attorney, Dennis Myers, served DWP with a hearing notice regarding yet another APCD rule; 200B. That one requires that DWP apply for permits for each of the 90-some wells now in operation in Owens Valley, considering these pumps or wells as potential air pollution sites.

Fryxell said that DWP's own EIR admits that pumping will cause the death of some vegetation, and also an increase in

dust in the air.

The hearing was set for May first in Bishop before the APCD hearing board. Failure to comply with the rule could ultimately end in DWP's payment of fines up to \$6,000 a day per pump. It was reported that DWP reacted "with anger and indignation."

Fryxell says he expected to meet with Duane Georgeson and Paul Lane on this issue. It was implied that the May 1 hearing may be postponed or dropped depending on the results of the meeting.

AND DWP'S GROUNDWATER PUMPING came under fire from other official guns. One of those was a strongly stated, aggressive county ordinance. It's only in draft form now, but clearly, the Inyo officials mean business.

Talk of such an ordinance dominated much of last summer's public hearings over a proposed DWP agreement. And in past months, the supervisors ordered a special consultant to come up with a study and a sample

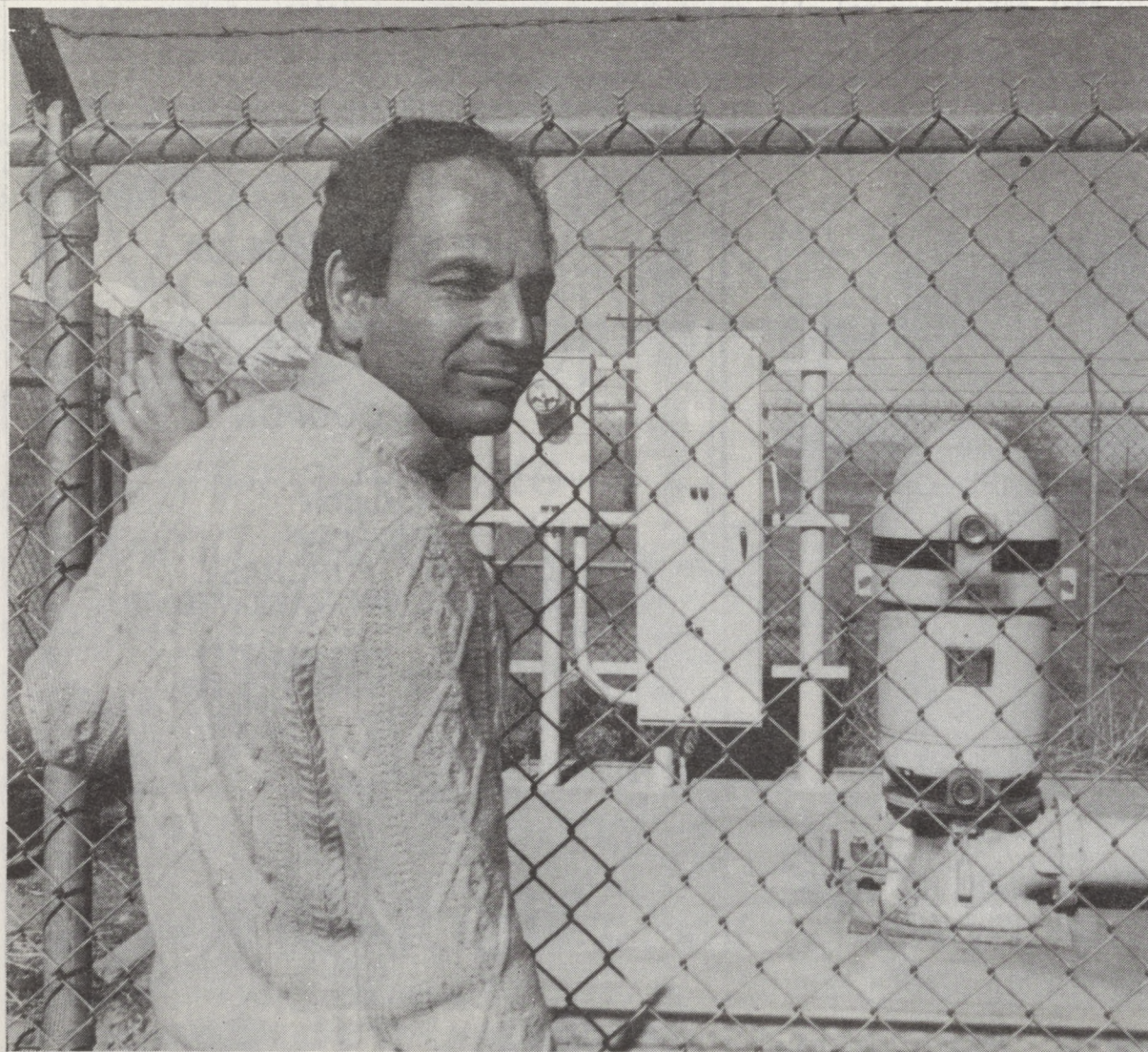
ordinance.

The result is a 17 page draft ordinance. The document calls initially for "prudent management" of Owens Valley ground and surface water, and says that such management has not existed in recent years causing "unnecessary and excessive drawdown of the groundwater table..."

Not unlike a kind of localized bill of rights, the draft ordinance goes on to say "Inyo County has a paramount right and duty to govern the management and extraction of resources within its jurisdiction in order to protect the health, welfare and safety of the citizens of Inyo County."

The ordinance states that in order to offer this protection, Inyo County must adopt a "systematic regulation of extractions from the groundwater basin of the Owens Valley."

How to attain all that? The first step would be preparation of a water management plan for ground and surface water resources. An Inyo County Water Department would be formed



Groundwater ordinance consultant Weinstein at a DWP wellsite

Waging a permit battle against water takers

under a director and water commission.

Groundwater extraction standards would be set up, and water extractors would be required to apply for permits.

The sample ordinance allows that no "person, firm, corporation, or governmental agency (except an agency of the U.S. government to the extent federal law permits this ordinance), shall within the Owens Valley groundwater basin extract water from that basin by any artificial means without first obtaining a written permit..."

That permit would require extractors to report on extraction rates, time periods of well operation, a description of the adverse environmental effects of the extraction, any mitigating measures, intended use of water, description of alternatives available (including water conservation).

And until the ordinance is enacted and the water management plan approved, an interim permit process for groundwater pumping would be established... "All persons extracting groundwater must submit the necessary application and data as required under Section 7.01.041 of this ordinance..."

A permit process would also be established after the management plan were adopted.

Further, fees would be established for administration of the system. Exemptions could be allowed small water users. One supervisor, Lefty Irwin, had objected to this idea.

As for those who violated the ordinance, "the director may order the extraction stopped by posting a stop order at the site of the unauthorized extraction."

Expected annual operating costs of the operation are estimated to be around \$150,000.

Meanwhile, public hearings on the proposed ordinance were set for late April.

MCCOY PULLS OUT OF BISHOP AIRPORT

WHILE MONO COUNTY SUPERVISORS hastened to divorce themselves even further from the Mammoth Airport...Inyo Supervisors more closely embraced their own air facility at Bishop.

Dave McCoy, the ski entrepreneur, recently sent a letter to Inyo County asking to be released "immediately" from his lease agreement at Bishop Airport. McCoy's son, Gary, had

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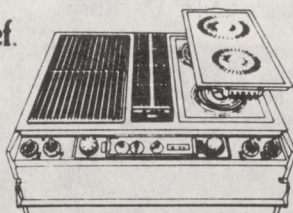
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been in charge of that operation, and he later told reporters that Mammoth Mountain's ski activities were taking up too much of his time to allow for airport duties at Bishop.

County Administrator John Smith said he thinks the McCoys "lost interest" in the Bishop Airport since they sold their airline, Sierra Pacific. The younger McCoy will hold onto an airplane maintenance facility at the airport. It is under a separate lease.

Mike Kelley, a McCoy employee at Bishop said that the reason McCoy got out of the Bishop Airport was because it wasn't profitable...that "there is a scarcity of fuel and so not enough to sell, and the only source of revenue available is sale of fuel and hangar rentals."

But County Administrator John Smith insists that there is plenty of fuel. The Inyo Supervisors doled out some \$15,000 to pay for aviation fuel, then they agreed to hire two temporary part-time workers to keep the airport running: Don Partidge and another man as yet unnamed. For now it appears that the airport will be manned seven days a week, 10 to 12 hours a day.

Although Inyo officials claim plenty of aviation fuel, observers believe that there may soon be an even greater need as the Mammoth Airport falls farther and farther away from re-opening as an attended facility.

The Mono Supervisors have, of course, withdrawn insurance coverage from that airport. They show little interest in getting involved.

Rumors that the airport runways would be x'ed out by June first were denied by the Forest Service. Bob Grom of the Mammoth USFS office said the airport will continue to be open, but only "at the risk of those landing."

Meanwhile at last report, there had been five plane crash-

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es at the Mammoth Airport. No serious injuries. Grom said that to his knowledge none of the crashes could be shown to be the result of the airport's being left unattended,

It had been reported, however, that Mammoth Sky Lodge's Flave George could himself x out the runways, but it is believed that he must gain approval by the State Board of Aeronautics first. None of that is anticipated.

Asked if Dave McCoy has made any offers for Mammoth Sky Lodge in the airport negotiations, Forest Service man, Dave Marlow, said that to his knowledge McCoy had not. He did say that McCoy is a stockholder and member of the Board of Directors of Sky Lodge. Marlow said that it is "our understanding that escrow is still open between the county and Sky Lodge." And so the Forest Service waits, waits on that development and on numerous parties to claim ownership of the improvements at the airport ...they have until June first.'

GROWTH INITIATIVE: PETALUMA HATES IT

DID THE WELL-MEANING "limited growth" people of Petaluma



Smashed plane at Mammoth's unattended airport
Five crackups but so far no serious injuries

spawn a bureaucratic bummer? With the approach of Inyo's own limited growth initiative election the answer to the question became one well worth looking into.

It was in 1972 that Petaluma voters eagerly adopted such an initiative, one that allowed a

five percent population growth rate and which limited housing to about 600 units per year. Those who support the status quo in other counties, including Inyo, have since patterned their own aspirations for control af-

Continued page 50



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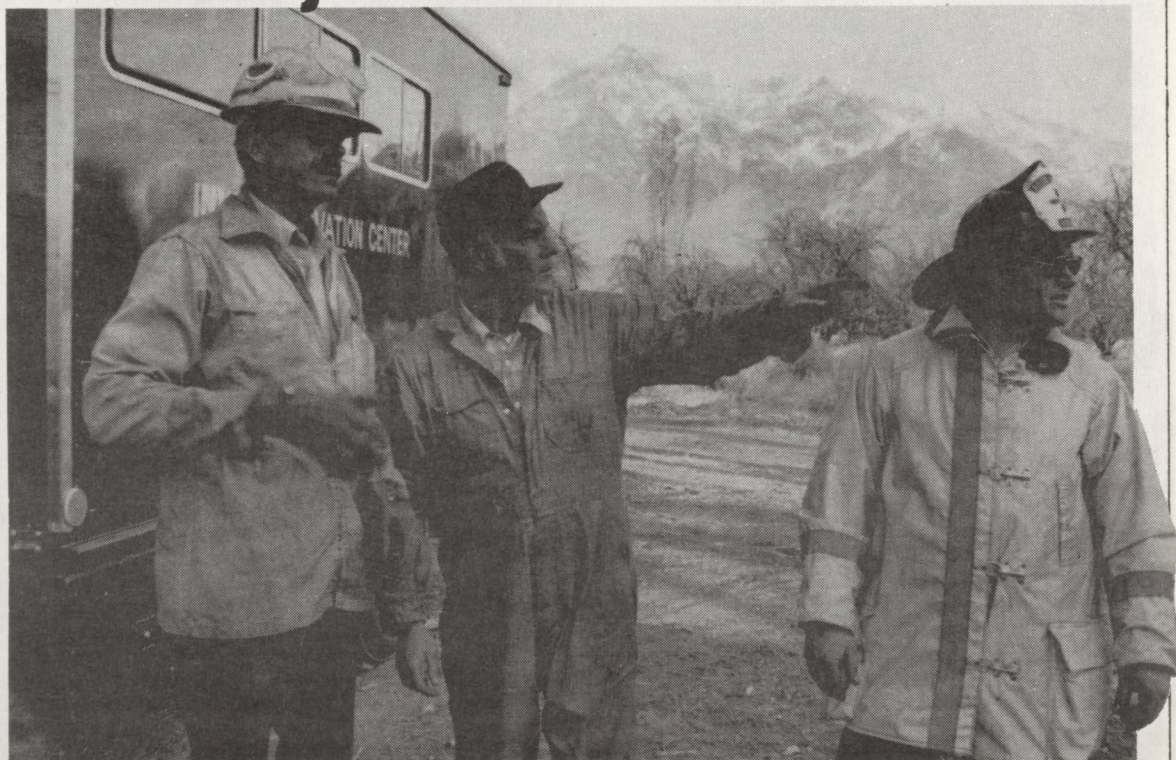


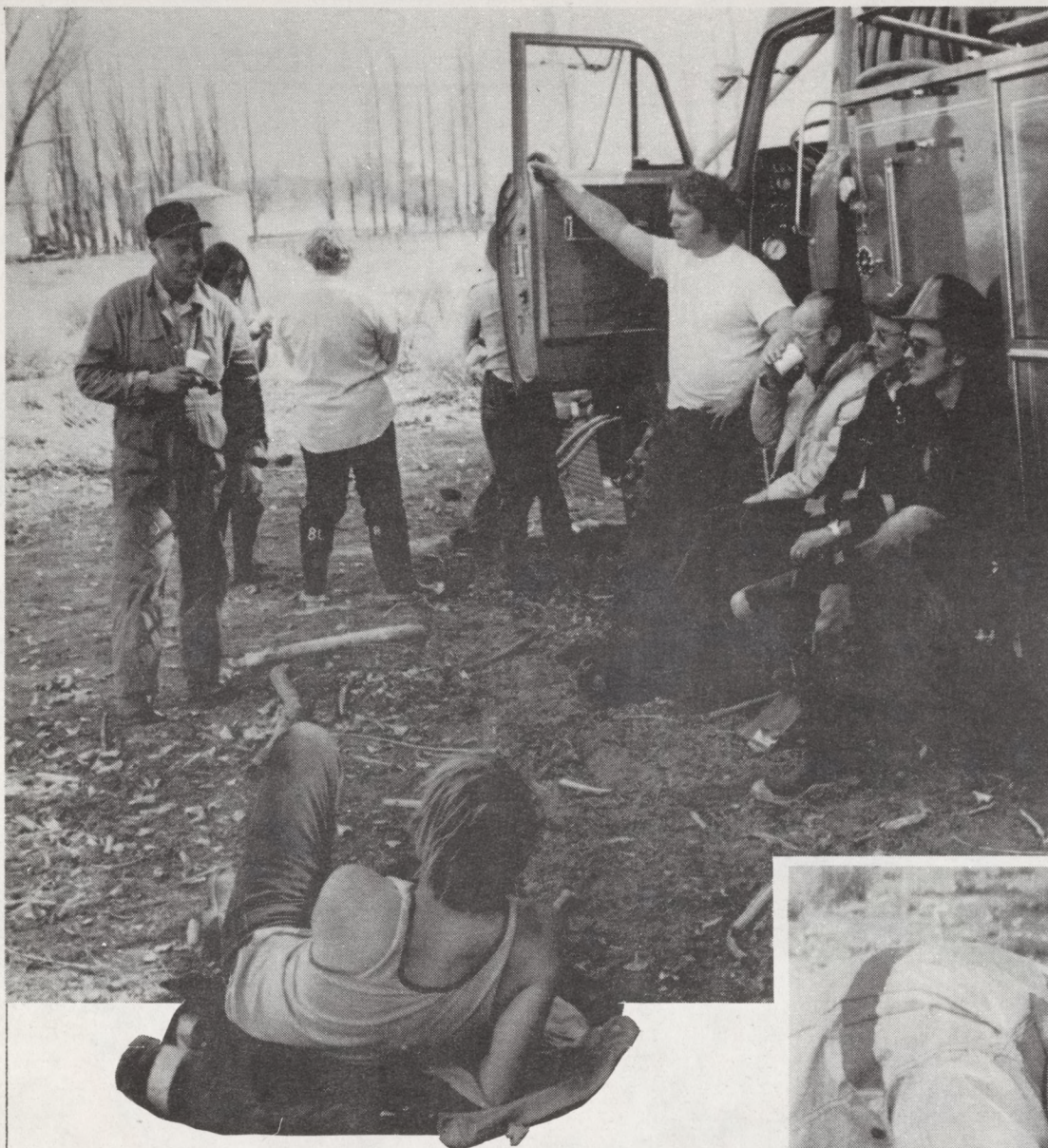
Firemen feverishly work the perimeter of a fast-spreading fire near Fort Independence; a sudden March wind had spread a rancher's small brush fire into a conflagration.

Season's first major brush fire

Photos:
John Heston
Benett Kessler

Help arrives. A fire crew from the Bishop Conservation Corps facility comes 50 miles to aid in suppression of a fire that burned for nearly eight hours.





Men and women volunteers responded to the out-of-control fire late in the morning. By 4:30 they were exhausted, and relaxed with coffee. The fire was pushed by high winds and it burned until after dark. Rows of charred trees in background fell victim to the fast-moving fire.

Below: Their eyes stinging from blowing ash, dust and smoke, firemen were treated at the scene.



Taking advantage of the first warm spring days, Scott Kemp and a number of Samatagama Ranch hands went out to clear brush one morning last month. They started a fire on a small section of the sizeable pasturage leased from the Department of Water and Power. As the day grew warmer, a stiff breeze began raising dust across the dry grassland; it caught up the fire and spread it quickly out of control. Before it was over, nearly 200 acres lay charred, and stands of trees were turned to blackened spires which fell with each new gust. The small Independence fire department battled the fire until dark, aided by DWP water tankers and bulldozers and by a crew brought in from the Bishop Conservation Corps headquarters. The firemen considered the recent rains - and looked forward to a "heavy" season of tall grass and more fires.

And still other problems lay ahead for the counties' fire-rescue people. See next page.

A new season of senseless carnage on 395

News-
Letter *Fotopage*



A father and son driving in a following car watched, horrified, as the car ahead swerved out of control and spun over at high speed; in the overturned car rode his two daughters and their girl friend they brought along to join the family on a Mammoth ski trip.

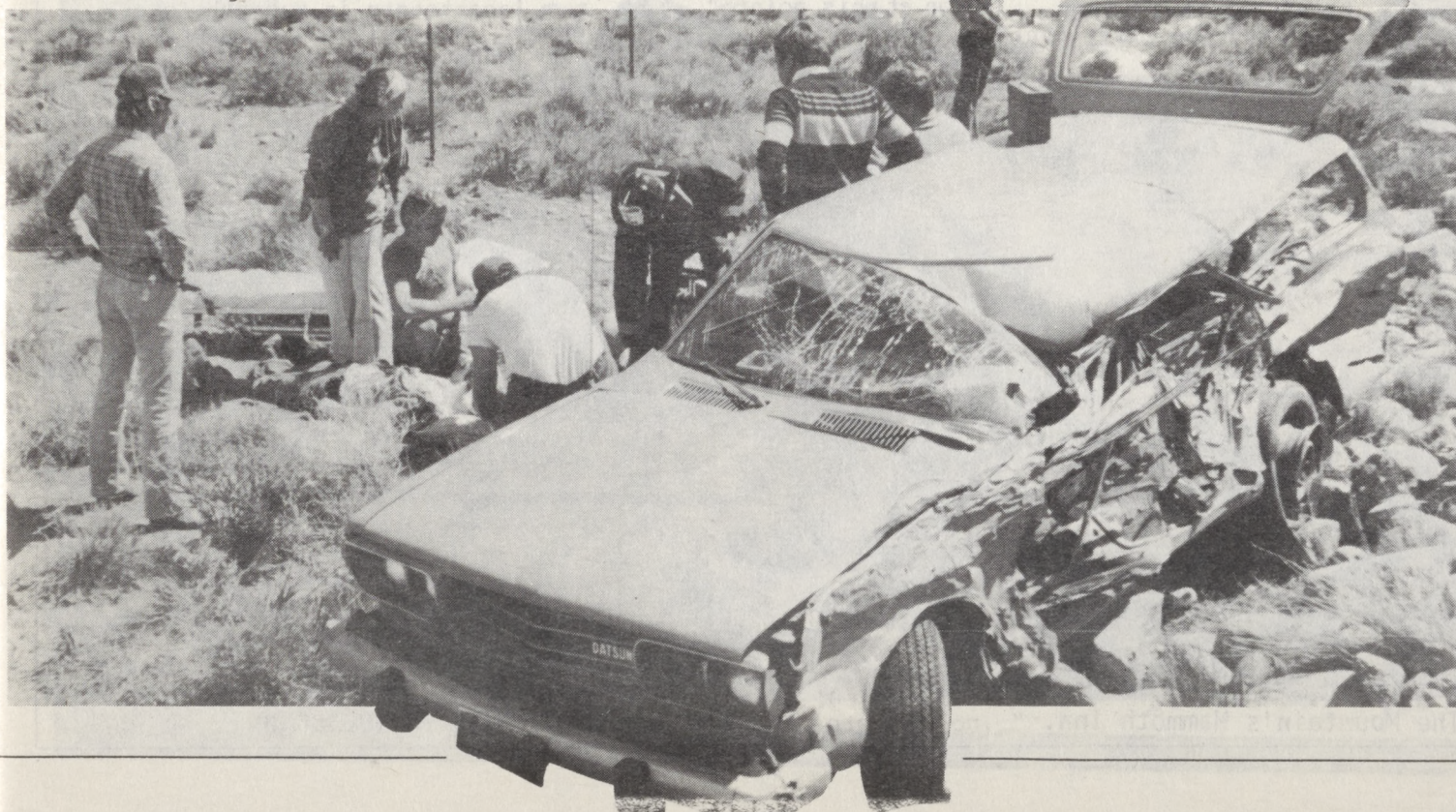
On a four-lane stretch of Highway 395, this Nevada man's pickup swerved across a centerline divider and into the car below. Rescuers picked him from the ground and laid him on the tailgate of the pickup to give him first aid before transporting him to an Inyo hospital.



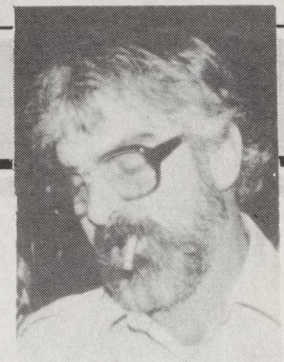
It is the highway of skier and fisherman, hiker, hunter and outdoorsman. Its intermixed miles of four-lane and two-lane construction laid through endless stretches of hypnotizing desert and high-curving mountains are as dangerous as any in California. Warm weather seems to invite an increase in mishaps. In the two accidents pictured here, no fewer than six people suffered injuries to join a rapidly mounting list of statistics for Inyo and Mono Counties. In spite of decreased traffic due to gasoline prices, the year's figures appear for 1980's first quarter to be "about average," and before the year is over may equal or surpass those in the two-county area for 1979: 960 accidents that killed 38 and injured a staggering number of others - 625, or almost two a day.

In a rending, tearing broadside, the pickup knocked this car completely off the highway. Its driver sprawled on the rocks bleeding and nearly unconscious. A small boy was also hurt.

Photos:
Benett Kessler
John Heston



Wally's View



Wally
Charleston

DAVE McCOY is a man to be respected. He's self-made, an exceedingly shrewd businessman, and he maintains a low press profile locally. His ski resort is famous throughout the world. And Dave McCoy is a good neighbor. His facility provides jobs for people in excess of a thousand a year. He has a program of employment training. Employee benefits are more than adequate. Employees are loose and they like their jobs. They like the winter lifestyle and they are seemingly content with their pay. Almost.

But where the more than 140 ski instructors are concerned, everything is not under control. We tried to reach Dave McCoy to talk to him on several occasions. We had heard from reliable sources that there were wage disputes and as many as eighty ski instructors were having meetings to discuss them. We never got through to McCoy.

Recently, a series of interviews took place with Rick Tracy, Head of the Mountain personnel. Rick said, "The mention of the Teamster's in connection with Mammoth Mountain (see last issue of ESNS), was solicitation. Dave McCoy wasn't very happy with it..." Tracy stated he "just gave all his employees a fifty cent raise across the board. The timeliness of the article made it appear our arm was twisted." (Later he stated that no one received the fifty cent raise).

Tracy told us the best organized employees seem to be the ski instructors. Bill Egan, a long term employee and close friend of Tracy's is an active representative of that group. He has presented management with an employee wage and benefits package. Personnel states the package Egan has prepared is "vague" and "impossible to get at until next year." Egan has voiced that the 120 or so instructors he speaks for will not return if the Mountain "shuts the door on the proposals." Egan has not talked to the Teamsters. The Teamsters express they are not pushing anyone to talk to them. But Dave McCoy is not so naive to believe that labor organizations aren't keeping a watchful eye on things.

FURTHER, Tracy and I talked about the problem of housing employees in coming seasons. There is pressure to convert the beautiful Mammoth Mountain Inn to 100% visitor business and zero employees. Tracy says "Next year's housing is all supposition at this point."

Lodging for employees at the Inn

may stop and "Tony Romo, McCoy's idea man, is presently looking into operations."

Tracy concedes that housing next season's employees may yet have to be one of the options.

He says, "The fall pre-occupation is hiring and housing problems. The quality of employee will go down significantly if we don't solve the housing problem." He states, "People that have developed the Village, have done so with no concerns for the local, working resident." About the Inn, he says, "We saw the crisis, which was about three years before we should have gotten involved. We were concerned. Fortunately, the Inn was for sale. Fortunately too, we had the money. Circumstances saved us."

Now, things may be changing.

A logical question to ask Dave McCoy, would be, does the Village become responsible to house those dislodged employees for next year's ski season. Should the Inn convert? A better question is, could it do so with less than two hundred rental apartments in Mammoth Lakes?

Michael Young, manager of the Inn operates seven days a week,



The Mountain's Mammoth Inn. "...no concerns for the local, working resident" ?

around the clock. He runs it with a staff of thirteen and a message desk, and he services guests and employees alike. At the moment, he has forty commercial, or public rents and he lodges 210 employees. The figures change daily. Young does not know what the future of the Inn will be. He relies on McCoy's wisdom and idea people to solve the problems of housing.

We'll continue to report on it. The Inn shows great promise for the development of Mammoth Mountain. It's architecturally suited, convenient to skiing, represents the healthy growth of the Mountain as a first class resort. No Village businessman can deny its attraction to further promote Mammoth as a ski area. However, Mammoth Lakes, in order to meet mandates on housing, should be continually updated by Dave McCoy. Housing needs in the Village are becoming intolerable and another two or three hundred mountain personnel scrambling for housing in the Village would make things a bit chaotic.

BRIDGEPORT is in a tizzy. Shakeups, resignations, terminations and talk of suspensions are rampant. Recently, we heard from Bob Stanford that County Counsel Louis Selby would be re-

signing. We hot-footed it to Bridgeport for a meeting of the Board of Supervisors, getting there early to talk to Selby. "Are you resigning as County Counsel?" we asked him in the privacy of his office. "No such thing," Selby says. "I'm perfectly happy with the way things are going. Housing and such are difficult, but I'm sure something will work out. I'll not be resigning as County Counsel. I think things are running smoothly."

Later, the Board of Supervisors entered executive session to discuss "personnel matters." Seven minutes following, Louis Selby was called to join them. Five minutes following that, the Supervisors took their seats in Chambers and announced that Louis Selby was resigning "for health reasons."

I, caught up with Louis Selby in the halls of the courthouse. "But, you told me you were not resigning. You said things were going well and no such thing would happen."

Selby said, "I guess I'm just an outsider here."

I'll be talking to you soon.

Wally

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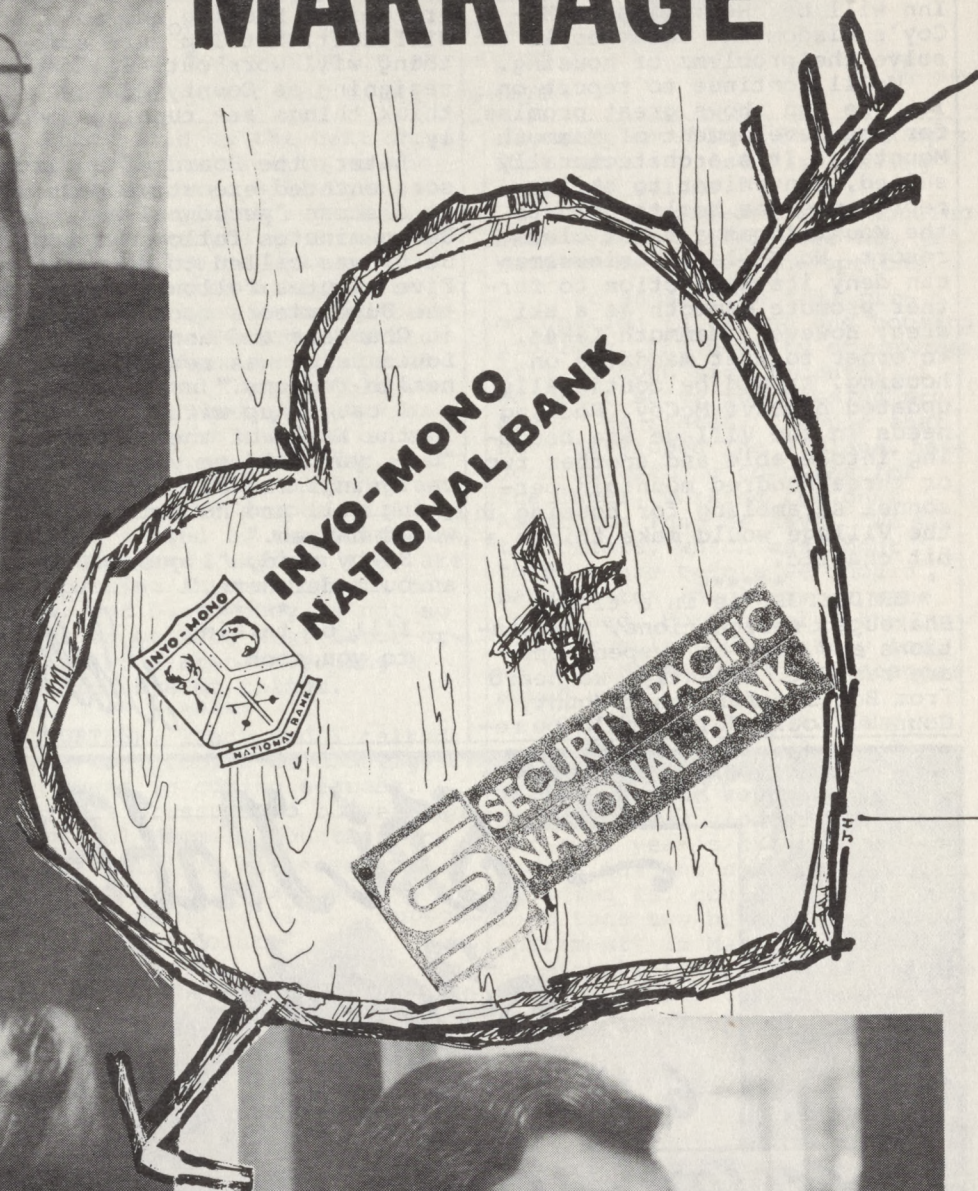
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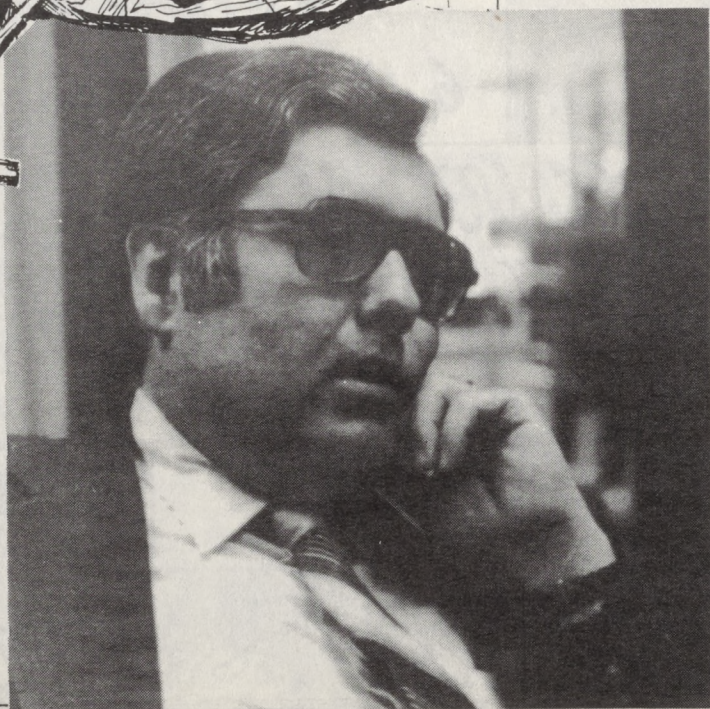
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MONEY MARRIAGE



Inyo-Mono president Don Bickle becomes a Security Pacific vice-president in the merger. Largely responsible for putting the deal together, he is also reported to have made a small fortune from it having taken I-M stock options long ago. At right: SP's operations-planning vice-president Tom Elliott, one of the deal's negotiators.



Common sight in several Eastern Sierra communities: new signs going up.



Photo:
Benett Kessler

With a gloomy outlook for the economy (See accompanying economic report); with business in the Eastern Sierra down due to L.A. high gasoline costs; with a possibly growth-numbing initiative on the ballot; and with a water drain that rapidly turns Owens Valley into a desert; why would a major bank want to buy out the comparatively small local bank?

In the opinion of a Security Pacific public relations man, the answer was simple: "They were a very good organization."

And, so it appears, they were. The popular little Inyo-Mono bank chain that since 1965 had served the Eastern Sierra people had "approached" the larger bank organization many months ago. Its figures, its profit-loss statements, its prospects were in good order. Also its reputation.

"They made us an offer," said SP's Harlan Lebo, echoing the words of his bank's officers, "and we looked into FDIC and their annual reports. We determined that they were a well-organized and well-run bank. They were rated as a 'premier performing bank,' which is the highest rating."

To most people here and elsewhere a bank is a bank. They either do a good job with your account or they don't; you either like the manager or you don't, depending very often on whether he turned down your last loan request or not, or if he leaned too hard the last time

you were a little late in paying it back. Not till now, perhaps, did the eastern slope's people realize just what a dandy little banking setup they had. And now, if the claims and hopes of the Security Pacific people are to be believed, they'll have even a better one: More services, more money available for perhaps larger projects, the kind of bank, as SP proudly advertises, that "you don't have to think about." A kind of don't worry bank, one whose tellers smile brightly and make you feel better when you walk out of a Mammoth or Bishop blizzard to explain why you're \$286.36 overdrawn.

Lebo says the Inyo-Mono market is a "good one." In bankers' terms that means one that shows a reasonable amount of economic growth. His figures: "Mono showed an eight-point-nine percent growth in population over the past year. Inyo showed a two-point-eight percent growth, both showing potential."

What, for instance, is some of that "potential"? Well, Inyo County's government invests some \$6-\$8 million dollars a year. The county's treasurer-collector, John Treacy (a former banker) said he feels that "The competition is healthy and we will continue to support the local banks." Right now, Inyo County does most of its banking with Bank of America; until now B of A had more resources than the smaller local

Continued next page

bank. That could change, at least to some extent, since SP can now offer larger resources, expanded services. "We are hopeful," said Treacy, "that Security Pacific will provide good competition and that services will increase with more money available - more loans to the community." The county's account is no puny one, and the interest its account bears adds dollars to the local budget, so where the tax dollars are banked has bearing on the county's services: Presently Inyo County has invested \$7 million. In the 1978-79 fiscal year, a similar figure earned \$600,000 in interest.

With a more "competitive" banking system here, it is presumed that several of the larger business firms and wealthier private individuals may be looking over their options.

How big is Security Pacific? How big is (or was) Inyo-Mono? As of December 31, 1979, Inyo-Mono Bank reported deposits of \$24.8 million and assets of \$27.5 million. As for SP, think in terms 1,000 times that size: assets of \$23.5 billion; it is the 10th largest banking firm in the United States and is the second largest banking firm in California and 38 foreign locations.

Does more *bigness* determine banking's virtues? Sometimes, yes, at least in terms of services and in the ability to finance a community's economic growth.

The merger, which became official at month's end, laid out in hard cash \$76.50 per share for the 52,295 shares of Inyo-Mono National Bank stock, or a little over \$4 million. The cash paid to stockholders, many of them local, was itself expected to provide at least a small positive nudge to the local economy, depending of course, on what the local stockholders do with their newly-gotten gains. They could opt to invest it locally if the local economy looks good.

In the merger proceedings, a major headache for Security Pacific was an ongoing campaign to

reassure the smaller bank's employees that the change would make no difference in their jobs - except positive ones like better benefits, etc. Many had heard the rumors, typical of provincial towns, that they'd be replaced by SP's own people presumably imported from southern California. Not so, the SP people kept reassuring them. Finally, the matter took care of itself as March 31 came and went, and everybody stayed on.

One of these (though one who had been unconcerned with rumored replacements) is Don Bickle. In title only does he take a step down, from President of Inyo-Mono to vice-president of SP's Bishop bank.

Security Pacific is itself a part of a much larger conglomerate, Security Pacific Corporation. Its 18 directors, read like a Who's Who of American business. Among these are such names as Robert Anderson of Rockwell International; Thornton Bradshaw, president of Atlantic Richfield, William Keck, Superior Oil; Glen McDaniel, Litton Industries; Dwight Stewart, Carnation Company; Jacques Yeager, Yeager Construction; etc. Some of the officers and directors could themselves have *personally* bought Inyo-Mono Bank.

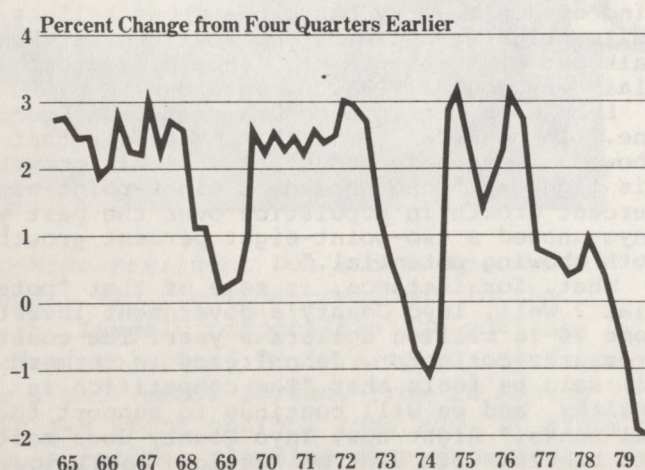
In merging with Inyo-Mono, Security Pacific adds seven relatively small banking outlets to make a total of 582 SP bank locations in California.

Under federal law, the SP people are confined in their retail domestic branch business to the "state of its charter - California. But the corporation is not restricted to California in banking-related activities. Sizeable subsidiaries in bank-related business serve all major areas of the U.S. with emphasis on the West Coast and in New York. Its representatives work in some 43 international offices in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America. The banking firm passed its centennial anniversary in 1971, so it is not a "new" company.

Outlook: SP economists bring good and

RECENT PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH

(Adjusted for Cyclical Variation)



Note: Data are for private nonfarm business sector all persons

Source: Council of Economic Advisors

THE ECONOMY: A 1980 SECURITY PACIFIC REPORT, AND AN UPDATE INTERVIEW WITH A SECURITY PACIFIC ECONOMIST

The maturing of the labor force should lead to a more productive labor force. The greater productivity of a more experienced workforce should partially offset the slower labor force growth in the 1980's. The impact of more women in the labor force is ambiguous and will depend on the extent to which women with children will be able to work full time.

THE DECLINING WORKWEEK

Another factor in the post-World War II period has been the declining trend in average weekly hours worked. In the total private nonagricultural sector, the workweek had declined from 39.8 hours in 1950 to an estimated 35.7 hours in 1979. The trend over this period has been an average annual decline of 0.4 percent. However, the long-term trend rate conceals some acceleration of the declining workweek. From 1950 to 1965 the annual de-

With such unlimited resources and power at its command, particularly in California, what will be SP's impact on the Eastern Sierra? Can it, or does it, avoid political and social issues? Probably not, although such influences rarely surface for public scrutiny. In that sense will its sympathies lie with the Eastern Sierra - or perhaps with Los Angeles, in any present or future conflicts? Already, its spokesmen are on record as hoo-hawing California's various limited growth initiatives, seeing in them further depressants to an already depressed economy. In that view there is a modicum of clear-cut justification. But how about other views? At this time, no one can say.

For now, at least, SP and Inyo and Mono Counties are honeymooning, getting to know each other. Will the union last in its present cordiality? That may depend, largely, on a kind of people's need: the cost of loans, the expansion of a local business; the community-consciousness of the bank and its bankers.

Maybe - hopefully- it will in fact be the bank "you don't have to think about." ■



THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Left to right: George F. Moody, Vice Chairman;
Richard J. Flanson III, President and Chief Executive Officer;
Lloyd P. Johnson, Vice Chairman;
Paul L. Smith, Executive Vice President, Treasurer,
and Chairman of the Finance Committee;
Carl E. Hartnack, Chairman of the Board.



Security Pacific Corporation

bad news - and point out the causes:

cline was only on the order of 0.2 percent. If measured from 1955 to the present, the decline was only on the order of 0.4 percent, but in more recent years, viz., since 1965, the decline has been on the order of 0.6 percent.

A number of factors have contributed to this trend of declining hours worked including: productivity growth, preference for leisure over work, the continuing shift from agriculture and industry into services, the increase of women and teenagers in the labor force, and the growing acceptance by many employers of more flexible scheduling and the use of part-time employees. Some easing of the trend of recent years is expected looking out to 1985, with the decline expected to average only 0.5 percent annually over the forecast period.

THE PRODUCTIVITY DILEMMA

As discussed above, productivity growth has been a key source of overall economic growth in the United States, both in the period following World War II and over an even longer historical horizon. However, the recent history of productivity has been quite dismal, and no imme-

diately improvement is in sight. This lagging productivity is one of the root causes of our current inflationary problems and our balance-of-payments difficulties.

WHY PRODUCTIVITY HAS LAGGED

Since 1973 productivity in the nonfarm business sector has averaged only 0.5 percent compared with a post-war trend of near 2.0 percent. A number of factors, some measurable but others more subtle, have accounted for this disappointing performance. The economic "boom-bust" cycle of the early 1970's, exacerbated by the Arab oil embargo of 1973, has discouraged capital investment in plant and equipment. The capital stock in relation to the labor force, i.e., the capital-labor ratio, has declined and is not expected to achieve its pre-1973 level in the foreseeable future. Another difficulty stems from the legislated environmental tradeoffs, which caused much of the actual capital investment to be put into such "non-productive" investment as pollution abatement and control equipment. The abrupt turnaround in the relative price of competing energy sources also required a signif-

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icant investment just to accommodate this change.

Perhaps less obvious, but of a fundamental nature, has been the lag in research and development expenditure by private businesses and the federal government. During the 1960's, basic research was strongly supported by the government. However, in the late 1960's, Administration policies backed away from support of basic research, and, with the slowdown in the space program, private industry lost this favorable fallout.

The changing structure of the economy is also a major factor in the decline in productivity growth. The greatest productivity advances in output per manhour generally occur in high technology, manufacturing industries and traditionally, of course, American agriculture has been a major contributor to overall productivity growth. But the trend of recent decades toward a larger service sector economy makes it difficult to achieve the same rate of productivity advances of an economy in an earlier stage of industrial evolution. Advances in productivity in the highly labor-intensive service sector are difficult to achieve. A more detailed appraisal of the productivity problem, including specific industry data, is presented in a subsequent section of this report.

There are no immediate signs of relief from the productivity slowdown the economy is currently experiencing. Certainly the near-term cyclical outlook is not encouraging. However, with a cyclical rebound, a slowdown in the rate of growth in the labor force, and some improvement in the investment area, the trend growth in productivity through 1985 should show a considerable improvement over the recent past. There has been some pickup in both governmental and private business expenditures on research and development. This resurgence is critical if a sustained longer-term growth in productivity is to be achieved. Investment in producers' durable equipment by the private sector should help to improve the capital-labor and capital/output ratios by 1985. And, finally, the

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maturing of the workforce should contribute to productivity improvement.

With interest aroused in the Security Pacific economic report, particularly in that part of it reproduced above, *News-Letter* arranged an interview with one of Security Pacific's economists, Tom Lieser.

Clearly, the Security Pacific people had seen the Eastern Sierra as a good economic investment. Why, otherwise, would they be buying banks here?

But there were other questions: Why, for instance, does SP see a somewhat brighter outlook for California than for other parts of an inflation-wracked country?

In a nutshell, Lieser's view is that we're heading for a recession, that's the bad news. But he also assured *News-Letter* that California will not be hit so hard by it. And he explained some of the reasons:

N-L: Why will California escape the worst of it?

Lieser: Because of industry... aerospace and electronics, agri-business, and service industries. International trade is active and there is foreign tourism which remains strong largely because of the weak value of the dollar. Even though there have been some plant closings (automobile), there was relatively less of that in California than in other areas.

N-L: So what about productivity in the state. Are people actually producing things or only filling out forms and providing services?

Lieser: There are no figures to point to for specific regions. But educated surmises indicate that California is assumed to have a higher average productivity than the rest of the nation. Capital stock is newer, and the labor force has a higher average education level. You might say that the stock of human capital is higher. California is a high-wage state; there is more productivity, but then the cost of living on the whole has got to be higher. Los Angeles and San Francisco would be the highest cost areas.

N-L: How are the interest rates and credit matters affecting us?

Lieser: Interest rates are very high, aren't they... We feel that inflation in the economy results from the high rates combined with other restraints - those credit controls imposed by the federal reserve on the government. For instance, there's a ceiling on the growth rate of non-secured loans. But even before those policies, the rates began constricting credit expansion. Then the new policies made restriction even more pronounced. As far as allocating credit, the government thinks that it's more useful to lend to agriculture and to housing. But it's hard for us to lend when no one wants to borrow.

N-L: How high do you think that interest rates are likely to go?

Lieser: A notch or two higher... maybe twenty-two percent. It will probably hang around twenty for awhile after that and go back down again.

N-L: How about bank deposits, are they up or down?

Lieser: Deposits in total are not down, but we're having to buy them. By that, I mean that deposits are shifting to time certificates and so forth (that pay higher interest).

Continued next page

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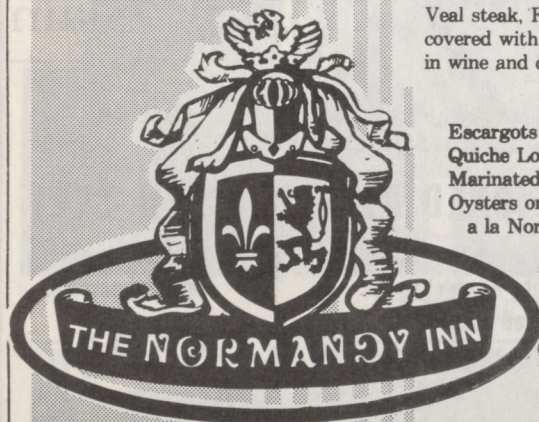
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N-L: Where would you suggest that the consumer look for credit?

Lieser: Where they are already established.

N-L: Are there more investments going on outside banks now?

Lieser: Some are dealing outside of the banks. But many are just sitting on the sidelines with lots of money.

N-L: How did this soaring inflation thing get started. And is it presently just related to energy costs?

Lieser: The beginning of the problem of inflation began in the late 'sixties. There was a series of large budgetary deficits and we never really eliminated those pressures. Currently, the inflation problem is rooted in energy-price increases, OPEC plus some domestic de-regulation. But the inflation problem has actually entered a new phase: It's not just energy. It is not politically popular to throw people out of work, and it's an election year. And so the government has clamped down on credit expansion. They're concerned about the tenacity of inflation.

N-L: Does the apparently popular idea of "I prefer leisure over work" have anything to do with the inflation problem?

Lieser: It could be a contributing factor. The average production level is high enough, but workers opt for more leisure time. The US still has a higher production than other countries although Germany and Japan are catching up. The problem here is that things aren't really moving ahead.

N-L: Speaking of growth, what do you think of some of the so-called "limited-growth: initiatives already passed or on the ballot in California?

Lieser: History shows that people generally do not like involuntary no-growth situations. It's nice to preserve little islands of tranquility, but eventually those on the island will have to worry about the stability of that society. A depressed economy can bring on a natural no-growth situation, and there is some perverse part of society that actually welcomes that result of a depressed economy.

Security Pacific's 1980 economic report covered such long-range areas of energy and inflation along with its examination of "productivity." The report indicates that the government will permit domestic energy prices to rise still farther - and, ominously, that prices of food, fuels and housing will continue to rise.

A "productivity" summation - that is, a bottom-line look of what people are actually producing in terms of marketable goods here and abroad - may exceed other nations, as Lieser points out, but productivity is not "in forward motion," hanging instead in a kind of stagnant status quo. Further support of that appears to be the declining work week: The generation is one in which most people prefer to play than to work, contributing unknowingly to the inflation they complain of, although the SP report fell short of saying that in so many words.

Why this lag? Some reasons offered included the shift from the production of goods to "service industry." In other words, a well-off society can afford to pay others to provide services for them, some of these "luxury" services. The rock-bottom example might be the attitude of why wash your car when a machine (using much energy, water, detergent, etc.) can wash it for you? Another example - and, again, the report fails to deal in what may be called layman's examples - Why package goods (using irreplace-

able materials and energy) that could be bought cheaper in bulk out of a barrel? "Services" include many things for domestic and industrial application that do not actually "produce" marketable or even usable goods.

And in our affluence, the kind of wealth that could produce such luxury, our society may have indulged itself about as far as it can go. We're feeling the effects, now, paying the price.

How "spoiled" has the nation become? There was the example, in Inyo County, of a young man just recently returned after a year's living in India: "What," he was asked, "was the first thing that caught your eye when you got back?" He reflected a moment, then answered: "Cat food." Then he explained:

"Where I have been, they haven't the cans to put the cat food in, even if they had the cat food. They haven't even got very many cats; some people eat them."

"And what do those few cats eat?"

"Sometimes they feed on dead carcasses - or even corpses. You see, we are a very lucky nation; sometimes we act like we don't appreciate that fact. And sometimes we get lazy and spoiled...and then we complain of 'hard times'!"

California's, it seems, are luckier even than other areas of the nation.

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View from the Right



Paul
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NOW THAT THE "GREAT WHITE FATHER" has presented his inflation-fighting plan and hopefully prays that the Congress will go along with him, we slaves and serfs are in for more of the same: higher taxes; higher prices; less and less goods and services; and, greatest tragedy of all, a lower standard of living.

Our troubles can be traced back to the early nineteen hundreds with the formation of the Federal Reserve System; the adoption of the Sixteenth Amendment to our Federal Constitution (permitting the taxing of incomes); raising the price of gold from sixteen to twenty dollars an ounce; our Federal Government's adoption of Keynesianism as economic policy.

For some six thousand years of recorded history, mankind has held gold and silver to be the only safe and convenient store for his efforts and wealth. Many modern intellectuals and "egg-heads" hold these "barbaric" metals to be relics of the past and of no value for our modern age of so-called "economic en-

lightenment". Recent events have proved the error of their theories. An ounce of gold or silver has been the same quantity it has always been. It is the dollar that has lost its value. People, the world over, prefer gold and silver to our dollars; and why shouldn't they?

Governments produce nothing. They are like mistletoe in a tree; sapping the economic lifeblood from the people governed until both perish. The authors of our Federal Constitution were well aware of this peril. They tried their best to prevent it through constitutional restraints. We, the heirs to the great document, have permitted its corruption and we now pay the price.

Until we are willing, as a nation, to forsake these foreign theories which have been thrust

upon us (in many cases with our cooperation), continued economic slavery, serfdom, deprivation and progressively lower standards of living will become our way of life.

There is an answer to our dilemma: a return to sound money (gold and silver); greater productivity; get governments out of our private and economic lives; return to sound constitutional government limitations. Each must ask: "What effort am I making to correct the error of our ways?"

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Paul



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Meter strike, water



DWP's Bob Hayner arrives to shut off water service at the home of Pat Boyer. She angrily refuses.



DWP VICTIM?

A doctor said the water shut-off at Lone Pine was a "contributing factor" in the sudden death of Theresa Gray, one of the strikers. See accompanying story.



Boyer, who had parked car over the meter, stood her ground.

r shutoff, confrontation - death

By the end of April it may be March all over again - a dreary replay of water shutoffs, angry protests, and increasingly violent anger against Los Angeles' Department of Water and Power. If by April 24 the people from seven Lone Pine households don't agree to pay their water bills, bills they believe to be unjustifiably excessive, they will once more face the prospects of having their home water supplies cut off.

The March water users' strike appeared in retrospect to be of only modest success - but also of considerable impact viewed in terms of its intended purpose - to call attention, statewide or nationwide if need be, to Inyo's sorry plight and its rapidly-eroding relationship with a water department that dominates the land, politics and economy of an entire area. In recent months, the county's officials and many of its private citizens have fairly begged the department to allow them water at an affordable rate; the unresponsive department, however, goes

its way hiding as always behind a favorite shield of defense and justification - "the Los Angeles City Charter." DWP apologists shrug that they have no control over their actions in the Owens Valley. Fairly oozing with pious innocence they point, again, to the presumed devil, the charter. Last month, the convenient pretense wore ever thinner as a growing number of people here and in Los Angeles began to see through to the real DWP motive: profit, and the perpetuation of DWP officials' swinging lifestyle (See Page 38).

During the 'problem of March, the water turn-offs and their attendant media ballyhoo - much of which was avoided by DWP top officials - there appeared to be more symbolism than substance to the strike. Then suddenly the DWP was caught off base in a very real way. Notified officially and angrily by a strikers' lawyer that the water turnoffs were in fact illegal,

Continued next page



ound. Greeted by strikers and television crews, Hayner drove away (arrow). Photos: John Heston, Benett Kessler

and also contrary to DWP's own stated policies, the embarrassed department acted quick to turn the strikers' water back on. Why the turn-around? DWP had failed to send out notices, a standard operating procedure in Los Angeles, that customers threatened with a turnoff did in fact have rights for a "hearing" and even an appeal before the department could stop service. Instantly, the DWP meter victims took advantage of the law and demanded hearings; some may appeal as far as the Department of Water and Power Commissioners later this month. For the preliminary openings, a DWP hearing officer, Jim Derry, made a desultory journey to the county in acquiescence to the strikers' demands.

Meanwhile, a handful of protestors at Independence and Big Pine also refused to pay the metered rates, paying only the so-called "flat rate" they've paid for years.

What happened at the hearings? By the time they were over two contradictory stories emerged: the reports of the strikers and the questionable reports of DWP officials who had quickly forbade any "open" or "public" hearings. One of the protestors who for months had helped in organizing the strike was Lone Pine's Lois Wilson. She said the hearings were "more like formalities" - procedures with little substance and having small effect, held solely for the purpose of living up to the letter of DWP's laws. Derry's own conclusion, as reported by Wilson, was predictable: "The department's billing is accurate and the rates are consistent with the Los Angeles City Charter." Appeals were routinely denied, no great surprise to anyone. Derry was expected to offer his recommendations to the water and power commissioners, who so far have proven equally bored, on or

about April 17. If his findings are upheld, as very likely they will be the protesting customers were to be given until April 24 to pay up or to be shut off again. Wilson anticipated Derry's report: "He left out information vital to the commissioners...a lot of half-truths." She said one important point brought up at the hearings and discarded out-of-hand by Derry were the experiments she and others had conducted with the department's meters. In Inyo County a large number of the meters had been performing with less than perfect precision running water bills into huge amounts. The department continues its denials that it may have installed faulty meters in Inyo County.

DWP's Duane Georgeson argues that the high bills are due to leaky water systems rather than to DWP's meters. And, surprisingly, he offered a reporter an individual example: "We have found a lot of leaks in people's systems since the metering began. John Heston's property is one."

"How's that again?", asked the surprised reporter. "How did you happen to bring up Heston?"

Georgeson replied, "Oh, I keep in touch with the men who work under me."

But how - or why - would one of the DWP's top officers in Los Angeles concern himself with the water system of one individual at Independence? Heston is the editor of Eastern Sierra News Service and he has long been a target of DWP's ire. His own amused retort to Georgeson's highly selective information: "George's credibility gap is showing again."

It happens that Heston owns no property, a fact that says little for the accuracy of DWP's information-gathering facilities.

Explaining the foul-up in failing to notify customers of water turnoffs, DWP's Paul Lane,



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a native of Inyo County who now serves as a water commissioner and who long ago promised publicly that Inyo would "never" have water meters, said coolly that "I don't know that it's a foul-up. Hearings were available, but there was no notice there like there is down here (in L.A.)" He explained that L.A. bills are computerized, that notice is routinely given pointing out that customers have access to hearings over disputed bills.

After the shut-offs and the ensuing reinstatement of services, the slightly red-faced department hurriedly included such notices in the bills of Inyo Countians. But even these provided less than complete information. They state, in effect, that if a hearing is desired the customer should contact the DWP office. After a few futile phone calls DWP's Lloyd Anderson wearily explained, providing additional information: "Contact" must be "in writing."

The unhappy mistake of severing services without notice - a technicality required by law and later admitted to by officials - could lead to some severe future headaches: One family, armed with a doctor's declaration that the water turnoff was a "contributing factor" in the death of an elderly Lone pine woman, was thinking about a possible lawsuit (See Page 34). Concerning that death Paul Lane had little to say: "I couldn't comment on it...That's too bad."

Meanwhile a DWP spokesman reported that at Big Pine more than 50 water customers paid only the flat rate, but that only three were given hearings. One of those three is the owner of the Big Pine General Store, Connie Johnson, who later reported a revealing conversation he had with hearings officer Derry: "I told him I

think the water rates are unfair, considering that the water source is here. I told him we're being charged for transporting water to L.A.

"I think the hearing was just a formality, but I urged Derry to report to the commissioners on a conversation I had with a Los Angeles city councilman. That councilman told me that the people of the Owens Valley will be strapped with meters until they get rid of the district attorney and the supervisors...and that he would just as soon see the people of Los Angeles boycott the county's recreation lands and 'see the valley dry up into sage brush.'...and the district attorney has a tape recording of that conversation." Whether or not Derry would be eager to make such a report to his bosses had yet to be seen.

The "hearings" before the commissioners may or may not indicate some small gains for Inyo's embattled meter victims. But win or lose, the results will provide little comfort for one Lone Pine family whose members count their losses in much harsher terms. For that story, turn the page.

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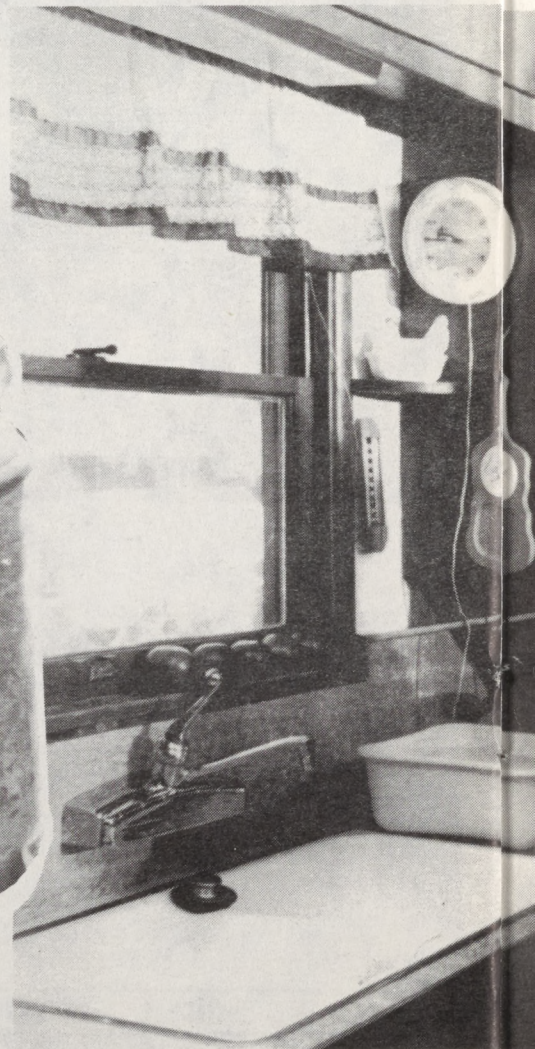
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John Heston
Benett Kessler

The water shutoff to a tragic

The water meter strike of early March had its grim aftermath. One of the strikers, 68-year-old Theresa Gray was dead by mid-month and more than one of her surviving relatives were claiming that the shutoff of her home water supply by the Department of Water and Power was a direct contributing factor to the death. They based their claims on a medical doctor's statement to them.

When the water was shut off due to the Grays' refusal to pay what they considered an exorbitant water bill, the elderly



The Grays depended on a garden to supplement their grocery budget. When meters were installed they could no longer afford to water a garden. Hoping that the strike might end metering, they joined in the strike, collecting water in whatever containers they could find. A committee lawyer advised DWP that its turnoff was illegal. Service was restored, too late for Mrs. Gray.

ff 'contributes' death

couple appeared to be in good health and good spirits. They talked to newsmen and television's Patty Ecker and Benett Kessler. They complained of the hardship caused by DWP's cutoff, but were proud of their own efforts: They were surrounded by jugs and cans of water (which were heavy and which needed constantly to be lifted from outside into the house, or from room to room), and they expressed determination to stay with the strike. Ironically, the water was turned back on only a day or so later when DWP was ad-

Soon after her water was turned off, Mrs. Gray fell ill and died of heart failure. She was buried at Lone Pine's Mt. Whitney Cemetery.



About two weeks before her death Mrs. Gray and her husband led newsmen through their neat Lone Pine home. She lugged water containers to kitchen and bathroom.

vised by a lawyer that the turn-off was illegal anyway.

What happened was best told in the bitter words of a son-in-law, Rudy Martinez of Torrence, Cal.: "She was a very sensitive woman. The water shutoff was not a thing she wanted to cope with ...She was a very spunky person and had been fighting in the water controversy for many years."

Soon after the Lone Pine issue came to a confrontation, Mrs. Gray contracted a respiratory problem, and was rushed to Southern Inyo Hospital. While she was still conscious there she worried over the water turn-off, her yard, and the fact that she and her husband of many years augmented their grocery budget by "living out of the vegetable garden." From her hos-

Continued next page

pital bed she told her daughter, Joan Martinez: "I'm sitting here and thinking about this DWP problem. I should be getting up and working on it."

She went into a coma and died later in the month. Could the water shutoff have been a contributing factor in her death? The family appears to think so. Said Rudy Martinez: "Dr. Christenson (Don Christenson, M.D., of Lone Pine) talked to us on

at least two different occasions, once from L.A. He said that the water shutoff was a contributing factor to her illness." Joan Martinez went farther: "Dr. Christenson stated on three different occasions with my husband and two children there that the water shutoff was a contributing factor to the illness. Also a nurse; she and I were in my mother's room (at the hospital)."

Martinez said that his mother-in-law had a known heart condition. She and Mr. Gray had lived in the Owens Valley since 1945.

Just after the funeral Martinez was asked if anyone may be taking legal action because of the shutoff and because of its connection to Mrs. Gray's death. "We haven't had a chance to talk about it much. But our concern now is that such practices might harm other people. It's a traumatic experience to go through."

What was his own view on DWP in Owens Valley? "I don't think the way they're going about this is proper. It's more greed than anything else."

"I live down south and what upsets me most is that I can see waste (of water) down there. And they're not asked to pay bills like these people pay. They hose down driveways."

Notified of Mrs. Gray's death, Channel 2's Patty Ecker was appalled. She wanted to return to Lone Pine with a camera crew to cover the DWP-related death. The survivors, however, expressed concern for their 78 year old father. "I think he just can't take anymore," said Martinez, "so we'd rather back off from this battle. The Concerned Citizens Committee will now have to speak for us, and by now the people

here certainly know where we stand. The word of what happened will get out alright."

"And Dad won't be putting in a garden this year."

Word of the tragic death spread quickly through the towns and through the camps of the strikers. Martinez had suggested that "the committee" would henceforth be spokesman for Mr. Gray and the family, that Mr. Gray would now have to retire from the conflict; the sudden death of his wife had left him stricken.

The committee people had difficulty in articulating their feelings; nearly all had been close friends of the Grays and their friendship had grown closer as the Grays joined the strikers - a commitment that many younger, stronger residents were fearful of making.

"What can we say?," said a committee spokesman, "DWP hurts people? So what else is new?"

While Lone Pine people struggled to pay the water bills, DWP officials showed a marked unconcern. Last month they were enjoying their profits.

For that story, turn to Page 38.



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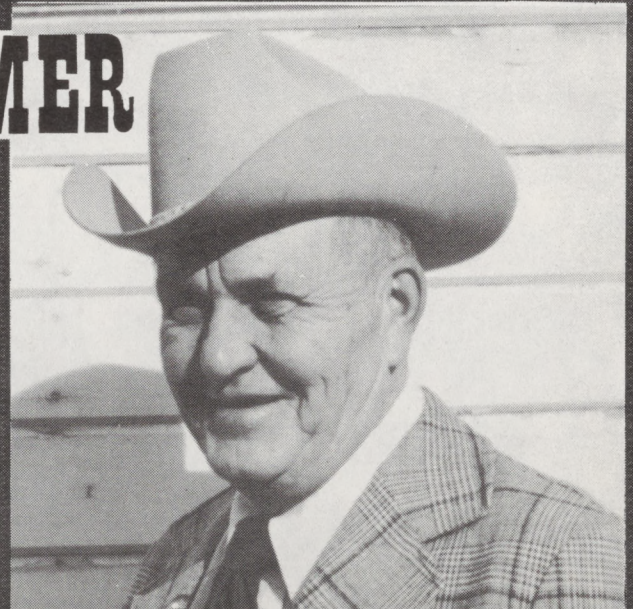
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With profits from high rates DWP bosses live it up and try to buy support

"While Inyo pays, DWP plays." That's the sum total of it in considering the department's virtually unlimited expense accounts that go directly into entertaining those people and officials it considers useful in reaching its political and profit goals, people in Washington, Los Angeles, Sacramento - and in Inyo County.

In February DWP sent out invitations to Inyo Associates, a local group originally formed to provide a kind of county liaison to DWP. DWP would take Inyo Associates members, and a select number of representatives from other civic and service groups, to Los Angeles for an expense-paid "tour" of DWP fa-

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Ice Cream

WINE? 1000 per person
NOT SURE ABOUT WINE AND BAR BILL OR ROOM SERVICE

WINES _____ CORKAGE _____
ROOM RENTAL _____
FOOD (PER _____)

3/6/80

1	0.45
	1.95
	1.25
	4.20
	5.60
1	0.45
	4.20
	5.55
	8.80
1	6.60
	4.20
	3.80
	1.95
	1.95
	6.15
	6.15
	7.70
1	0.95 *



Noticing the photographer in a nearby parking lot, a tour group member (lower right center) points and calls attention to him. Group was leaving hotel on Friday itinerary.

cilities. It would put them up at Glendale's Holiday Inn and wine and dine them from Thursday night through Saturday afternoon on a weekend in early March.

To get some idea as to how much DWP spends on people it wishes to "inform" - (Some say "buy") - News-Letter managed to gain the cooperation of certain service personnel at the hotel in obtaining original records.

News-Letter determined to get information for only *one night's* activities, a relatively inexpensive night as it was the first night after the tour group's arrival. The larger, more expensive entertainments would follow, although the hotel bills would remain essentially the same.

Copies of original hotel documents are reproduced here; the hand-written notations are those of hotel personnel explaining the various forms. They are shown here as "A," "B" and "C" with "C" printed on the following page.

The figures provided here are *deliberately shown on the conservative side*. It must be remembered that they reflect the costs of only *one night's* expenditure, that they do not include the far more expensive costs of hiring a bus, dinners and luncheons in following days, tickets to a Lakers basketball game.

The figures hardly reflect what might be called "lavish" entertaining. That kind of DWP first-class lobbying is reserved for VIP's far more important to DWP's operations, policies and political interests. But "lavish" or not, they do reflect the expenditure of money that DWP charges to its customers - customers who must pay the depressingly high rates here and in Los Angeles and who do not receive invitations to DWP's various entertainments. It can be accurately pointed out that DWP may have picked a poor time for its fun; for at the same time, back in Inyo County, hundreds of people were being thrown into severe hardships for their inability to pay DWP's exorbitant metered water rates. In several cases water service

was turned off, and in one case, reported in a foregoing story, an elderly woman died of heart failure with a medical doctor telling survivors that the water turn-off was a definite contributing factor to the death.

Here is what News-Letter managed to obtain from hotel personnel concerning that Thursday night in early March:

(A) The Holiday Inn's standard form for rental of a special dining room or banquet facility. Apparently it was filled out on March 6 by "Mike Abalos," DWP's representative. The hand-written notations at left were made by hotel personnel. Apparently, the DWP entertained "35" guests at "6 round tables 8 each." The DWP officials and their guests were served at a cost of "\$10 per person," but the tipster was not certain of the cost of the wine and bar bill. (The news service later learned from another source that "15 carafes of wine" had been provided for dinner at a cost of "two or three dollars each." It was probably a cheap "house wine" at that price.) No figure was available for the cost of a cocktail party preceding the dinner. The officials and guests dined on "Prime Rib (Med. Rare)" as shown. The cost of the room itself (upper right) was not a lot, "\$50." It appears, then, that DWP paid out a minimum of \$445 for a single dinner. And that does not cover the cost of cocktails or tips. It may be that more than "35" people attended the dinner. (See below.)

(B) A cash register slip from the cocktail lounge of the Glendale Holiday Inn. The lounge is situated next to the special dining room and both are located just off the hotel lobby. After dinner, a number of DWP's Inyo guests opted to "have a few drinks in the lounge."

(It should be explained here that DWP hosts went to great pains to announce to their guests that DWP would not be paying for drinks either here or at other dining places on the tour. However, it is known that the officials did in fact reach in their own pockets to buy rounds of drinks; it was assumed that they would be reimbursed in their own expense accounts and that DWP did not wish to be officially on record of having entertained in cocktail lounges.)

Having been put on notice that a reporter wished to know the cost of the later lounge party, a hotel employee set tickets aside and later tallied them up. The few people who went into the lounge remained there only a couple of hours, spending a total of "\$100.95." Three figures on the slip indicate that rounds of cocktails were purchased for the entire group three times: "10.45," "10.45," and "16.60," with other figures indicating that orders of two or three drinks were listed during the evening. These figures do not include tips to

the waitresses.

(In explanation it may also be pointed out that the manager of the bar was not the News-Letter informant; A tip or bribe was offered for information, but was turned down with the explanation: "I'll be glad to get it for you. Those b----- just announced they'd be raising my electric bill fifty percent over the next two years and I guess this is what they do with their money they charge me!"

(C) This is the "Inyo Associates" hotel guest list with the hotel desk clerk's hand-written room assignments entered on the form as the guests checked into the hotel, Thursday. The other notations at upper right were made by a News-Letter informant who had access to the register, and to a hotel copying machine on which this copy was made. The informant's notations are at upper right, and from these News-Letter learned that DWP had been given a special rate for its tour group: "\$33.00 single rate/day" and "\$39.00 double rate per day." Below that are the notations "16 double rooms" and "4 Single Rooms," indicating the number of rooms occupied by DWP officials and their guests. The informant also explained that the list was only a "tentative list" and that apparently not all of the people originally scheduled had turned up. News-Letter later learned and confirmed that at least two of the people listed on the original did not go on the tour, apparently having second thoughts about it at the last hour. News-Letter has removed those two names by blocking them out (white areas near top). If the figures are not entirely accurate they are thought to be very close. It would appear, then, that DWP spent a total of \$1512 for two nights' accommodations. The figure "\$624" at center right was the informant's own estimate for the total of "double" rooms for one night.

The news service's coverage of the DWP tour was a kind of afterthought.

The news service had more or less "covered" other DWP expense-paid tours and entertainments here, in Los Angeles, and in Washington when DWP played host to the entire California congressional delegation hoping to influence legislation. The March Inyo Associates tour was a kind of afterthought, coincidental to a trip to Los Angeles already planned by News-Letter editor John Heston who would be going there in the interests of one of his personal public relations and advertising accounts. "Coverage" of the tour consisted of no more than presenting his state press credentials to a handful of hotel personnel and

Continued next page

frankly telling them the information he wanted. The editor did not talk to anyone on the tour, although his presence there was immediately known. Hotel personnel were told that the editor preferred not to know their names, and that any documents they obtained should simply be slipped under the door of his own hotel room without comment,

which was done. Heston paid out a total of a remarkably low \$15 in tips for the information since most of the people appeared more than willing to help (Note the comment of one of them under (B) above).

The editor had little interest in the DWP tour beyond that covered here; he was there for other purposes, and, besides, as

he later reported: "I felt the tour to be relatively small potatoes when it comes to DWP's expense account lifestyle. I also felt that the figures for just one single night, would be quite enough to show people where a lot of their hard-paid electric and water money goes. As it turned out, the tour peoples' interest in my presence far exceeded my interest in theirs. None of them spoke to me

C

Sept 9 1980

INVO ASSOCIATES 3/6/80, 3/7/80

TENTATIVE GUEST LIST

Pat Farlander

Tommy Thompson
Darrell Catherman
Margaret Herleman
Elaine Berry
Bill McClung

Victor Wischart
Harry Taylor
Charlie Wall
Glenn Meyer
Ralph Morris

Jim Wickser 460
Cy Jeter
Lloyd Anderson

Rand Lewman, BLM
Tom Felando, USFS
Ray Schaaf, USFS
Larry Grant, SCE

Mel Bernasconi

Jay Ector
Ned Gilfillan
Stan Hays
Dean Loder
Kathy White

Tim McCutcheon - 346
Denton Sonke
Ron Stone
Dave Watkins
Jack Hardesty
Earl Brown
Jim Lackey
Frank Ludicke
Austin Keathley

\$33.00

Single Rate/Day

\$39.00

Double

Rate

Per Day

1.6

Double Rooms

4

Single

Rooms

\$624

Doubles

\$39.00

Wischart - Taylor 449

Wall - Morris 338 319

Fath - Ector - 445

Lewman - Schaaf - 348

Farlander - Herleman 448

Catherman - McClung - 421

Hardesty - Brown 344

Berry - White - 439

Sonke - Wallace - 444

Lackey - Anderson - 343

Grant - Stone 424

Ludicke - Buck 34

McCutcheon - Watkins 442

Gilfillan - Loder

Bernasconi - Bernasconi

Wickser - Jeter 460

Revised 3/3/80

M. Abalos

Copy of desk clerk's "tentative" DWP guest list with room numbers assigned beside names as they checked in.

other than in passing greeting, and I did not speak to them, although we were often together in the same lounge or dining room or in the lobby."

What Heston did not cover must assuredly have run the DWP expense bill much higher: Items on DWP's itinerary for the tour (which did not include treating the crowd to a Lakers game at about \$7.50 per person) included a Thursday luncheon at Crossroads Restaurant with other DWP officials; breakfast at Holiday Inn; a luncheon at Granada Hills Odyssey Restaurant; a dinner at Castagnola's Lobster House at Marina Del Rey, etc.

Ostensibly, DWP's expense-paid bus trip was to be for the purpose of "providing information" about its Los Angeles facilities. It would also provide a chance for "better understanding of DWP-Inyo County problems at a luncheon. And, in fact, a certain number of the touring Inyoans went precisely for that purpose - to get information about DWP and its operations. The group appeared to be roughly broken down into three segments (as later reported to the news service by one of three reliable sources who went along. "...a few who wanted to know more about the DWP; others who have a vested interest in the

status quo in Inyo County; and those who just wanted to take advantage of a free party.

"But Inyo Associates has turned into a purely social vehicle. It was at one time a kind of exchange-of-views forum, but they have not taken on a substantial issue in the past two or three years. Obviously, DWP wants to maintain the status quo here.

"The bulk of the trip was educational in intent and substance. Some people touched on the Owens Valley issue, but mostly they just showed us the size of the water network. There had been a water and power commission meeting on Thursday morning - Winnard, Paul Lane, Duane, everybody was there at the luncheon after the meeting. They spread out among the people at the luncheon. There were thirty-two people aboard the bus and most all attended most of the functions on the itinerary."

And what happened when the press suddenly showed up at the Holiday Inn?

"Well, they weren't happy about it. They made some humorous, malicious comments. Especially the next morning when they gathered for the bus tour; they thought you'd be following us all over town to

everything on the itinerary.

"Somebody asked if you were securely tied to the exhaust... Nobody really knew what to think, but some were concerned with how you'd be reporting the tour."

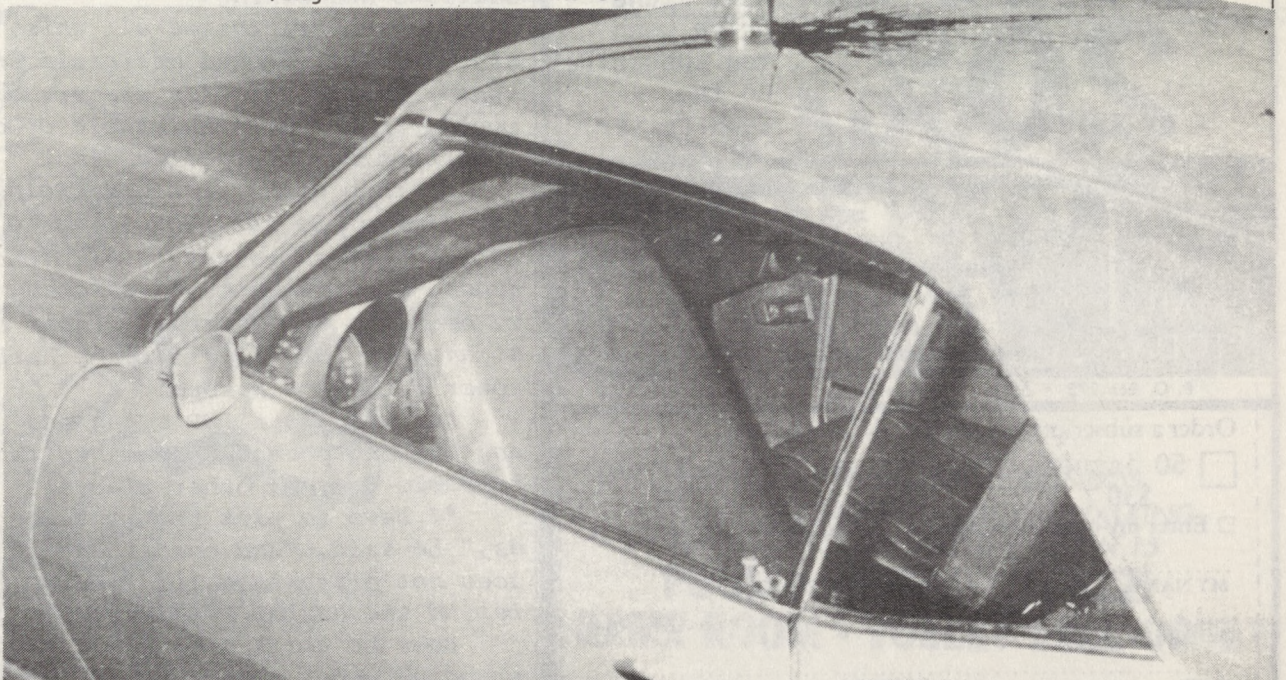
"One other thing...When we went to the marina for dinner to a well-known seafood house, we had steaks. I don't really understand that. We all thought we'd have lobster."

And how much did another spokesman think the whole tour cost?

"I've no idea. A lot, that's for sure. But nobody was really 'buying' anybody; those in the group who were already 'bought' were there of course, but I don't think the tour could have changed anybody's views on DWP, ...Mostly they were those people who have a vested interest in the status quo; they're already DWP's friends, and the invitations were just a kind of reward."

Contacted by News-Letter, L.A. City Controller Ira Reiner had some comments on L.A.'s high-living officials. See next page.

Spiteful cheapshot: A DWP partygoer's minor vandalism of an editor's car



The hotel manager's apologies were fervent, effusive; he was appalled: While News-Letter editor Heston checked into a Holiday Inn room, a DWP dinner and cocktail party was breaking up in a room just off the lobby and one of the celebrants noticed Heston's arrival. As Heston took his luggage upstairs someone plopped a drink in a plastic tumbler on top of the easily recognized press car. "It had to come from the DWP party," said the manager. "We used the plastic glasses there; we use real glassware in the lounge, and there's no other party going. It looks like someone doesn't like you. We're very sorry, but some of the people in that crowd have been acting like they never got out of the sticks before. We'll get someone to clean it up. Call us if there's any more problem."

LOS ANGELES' CITY CONTROLLER LOOKS AT L.A.'s "PROPRIETARY AGENCIES" ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES:

BY BENETT KESSLER

Lately, City Controller Ira Reiner has been taking shots at Los Angeles' "proprietary departments" - Harbor Commission, Airport Commission, and Department of Water and Power - and sometimes refusing to sign the checks to pay expenses for high-living officials who wine and dine their friends and VIP's at the tax payers' expense.

What are the legal and ethical questions involved? Beyond the obvious one - Should DWP spend money for such entertainments when water and electric customers are burdened with high bills? - it was difficult even for Reiner to draw the lines.

He reviewed the DWP tour and other trips by DWP officials and then concluded, in effect, that it was a matter of "business as

usual in Los Angeles."

But he says he does not approve of such practices.

Reiner, recently known for his gutsy approach to L.A.'s fiscal responsibility, has attacked the harbor department, and he called attention to one Harbor Department entertainment in which dinner alone cost \$7000. But he said the Los Angeles city council apparently finds many of these practices "perfectly acceptable."

As "proprietary departments," the three agencies do not have to explain their budgets to the city council - only to their own commissioners (biggest expense account users of all) for approval.

But it is Reiner who signs the checks, questioning only those he considers too far out on the limb of tolerance.

Examining DWP's tour, Reiner said that "as things go here, they're not extensive (in cost)." He said DWP puts together trips for people with whom the department deals - "with financial investors and bond companies," for instance.

Apparently, DWP's guests got far less than friends of the Harbor and Airport departments. Reiner said the other two departments "go first-class in air travel, accommodations and dining."

"I have criticized all this," said Reiner, "and the elected officials should understand: Public agencies are spending public money. They make a spectacle of officials entertaining other officials."

If they carry it beyond Reiner's tolerant limits (So far, DWP seems to be nowhere close), he can refuse to sign checks. He intends, for instance, to stick by his refusal to sign the \$7000 Harbor dinner check and also another for \$5700 for the harbor commissioner's trip to Europe.

And how about DWP's fun and games in L.A. and Washington and Sacramento (and very probably lots of other places)?

"I have to pick the most outrageous cases," he said. "And even then, the council does not often back me. And DWP is leagues behind the harbor commission."

Does he think a public utility should be spending money this way?

"Absolutely not. But that's the way it's done." It is possible that DWP comparatively "light" expenditures may be due to his recent crackdowns.

Reiner also noted DWP's insensitivity to decisions made in L.A., but which affect other people living outside Los Angeles without representation or control. For instance, DWP recently made a "gift" of \$44 million dol-

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lars to the city government - a kind of tribute or hidden taxation of people who in the long run must pay DWP's uncontrolled rates.

Reiner's comment about that: "The water and power commissioners are making decisions affecting others who have no control (as in Owens Valley's case), and it is particularly galling - like dragging fingers down a blackboard."

He also pointed out that a lot of the spending excesses are "hidden." In those cases it is very unlikely that the media or anyone else can very well find out where the profits go - even if they bother to look, in a world grown cynically apathetic about high costs and official spending.

In Inyo County where excessively high water and power bills help to pay for the officials' fun, it would appear that the seeming unconcern is on the decrease. Outright protests, such as seen in the recent strikes, and in certain acts of violence such as the firebombing at Independence, were virtually unheard of a decade ago.

Some claim that Reiner's look into expenditures may be politically motivated, but the inclination here and in Los Angeles seems to indicate a grassroots rebellion on the part of a burdened populace. ■

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Reporter
Ecker at
Lone Pine

For weeks, KNXT Channel 2 Television's Patty Ecker had been closely monitoring developments in the Lone Pine water meter strike. When DWP began turning off the water, Ecker and her film crew flew in to film the action. All morning she had covered the story, rushing around town with the action - and finally her cameras were there when one striker "caved in" - Ecker's words - and paid up to avoid being shut down. Later, as she and her crew were filming street interviews downtown she was approached by Lone Pine attorney Ben Combs. "Why," asked Combs, "do you want to single out my client as the only one to pay up to keep his water on?" Ecker replied that she hadn't "singled out" anyone, that her cameras merely recorded what had occurred (There had been a tense confrontation between a shop-owner (Combs' client) and other strikers who accused him of giving in to (DWP). But Combs was right; many others had in fact paid up. Ecker (and another crew from Ch. 7) scratched the story, but she was furious: "I almost ran the story," she said. "Nobody's going to tell us what to report." But the two TV channels' sense of fairness prevailed.

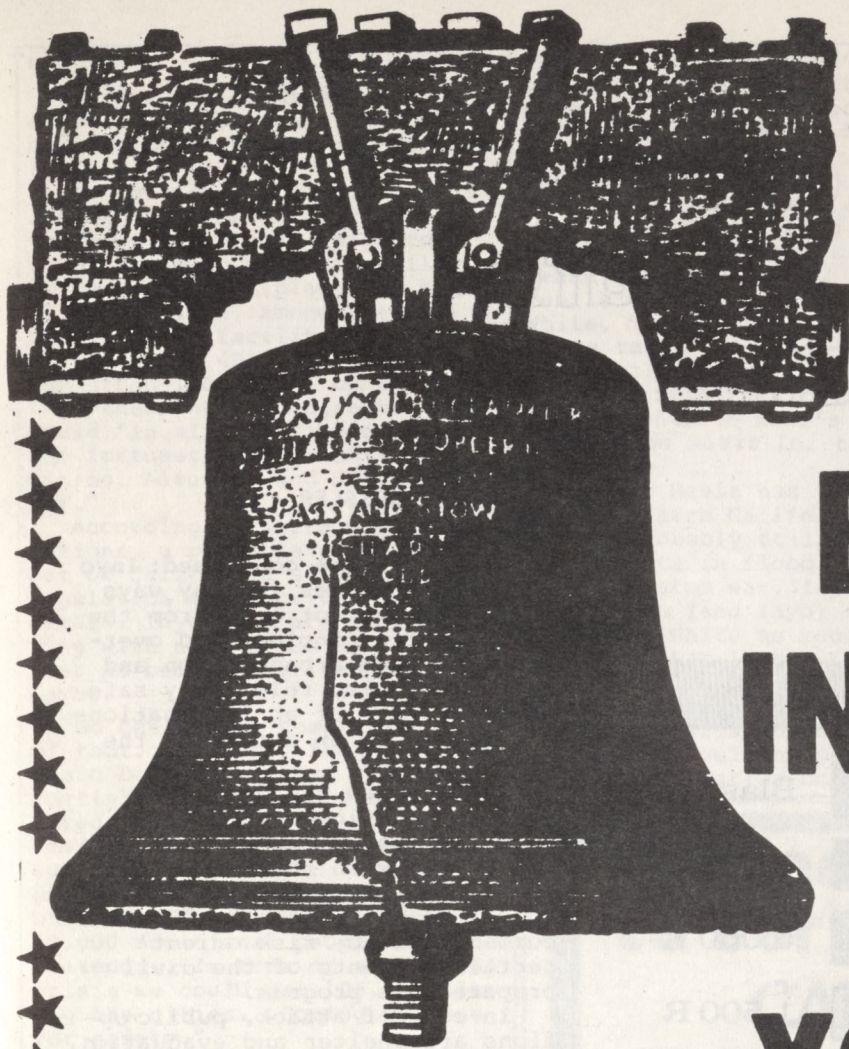
Coverage...

...and challenge

Confronting Ecker on
Lone Pine's main street
Combs reasoned with
the reporter, made no
outright demands.

Photos: John Heston





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In the event of a nuclear war, we are safe... sort of

By BENETT KESSLER

Private hopes confirmed: Inyo and Mono counties in many ways may be havens not only from the horrors of technology and overcrowding from urbanization and crime, but also relatively safe areas in time of an international crisis, or an attack on the United States.

A state map was devised by the State Office of Emergency Services. And it is a result of OES's work with the Federal Defense Civil Preparedness Agency (DCPA) in Washington to "Enable communities to 'risk orient' certain elements of the civil preparedness program."

In case of attack, public options are shelter and evacuation.

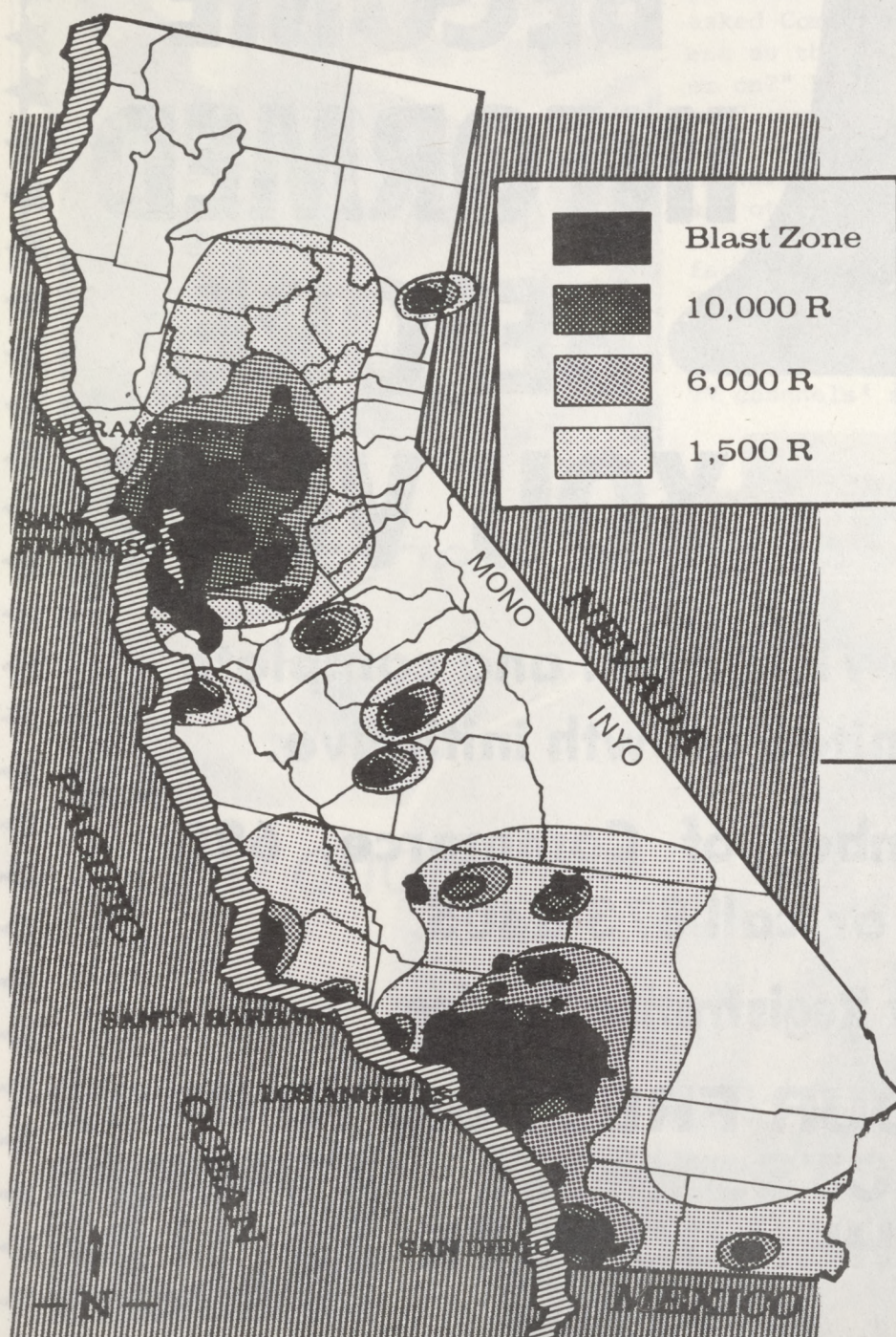
Black blots are high-risk areas "likely to be hit by multiple direct weapons." The result would be blast, heat and radiation which could destroy all property and life.

Shaded areas are those that would be exposed to lethal radioactive fallout. This depends much on the wind direction at

This stunning map is a composite of maps devised by the state Office of Emergency Services. The OES has been working with the Federal Defense Civil Preparedness Agency (DCPA) in Washington to enable local communities to "risk-orient" certain elements of the civil preparedness program" in the event of a nuclear war. The preparedness options are, admittedly, limited: (1) shelter, where available, and (2) evacuation, "if time

allows."

Assessing your personal megadeath potential is simple using this handy map. The scattered black blots represent the "high-risk" sectors, those likeliest to be hit by multiple direct weapons, resulting in blast, heat and radiation effects capable of destroying most property and life. The shaded regions define the areas that will be exposed to lethal radioactive fallout ... depending on which way the wind is blowing.



New West map by Nancy Rinehart, used by permission

the time.

As for the Roentgen effect, a dose of 600 Roentgens is considered by most experts to be lethal.

In the federal scheme, there are shown three categories of targets: (1) Places which contain strategic offensive military forces (2) Other places of high military value, among them China Lake's naval facility (3) Remainder of about 400 high-risk areas and urban-industrial complexes.

A thermonuclear disaster would "in all likelihood, spare the fortunate inhabitants of Lee Vining, Alturas, and Sawyers Bar."

According to state OES calculations, a probable 4 million out of California's 22 million population may survive nuclear attack. Inyo-Mono are shown along with nine or so other counties as being relatively safe. Maybe.

No one can be completely sure of that...In Mono, the situation could be pandemonium. Sheriff Martin Strelneck who was designated as co-ordinator of the Mono civil defense program, voiced our one big concern: "Our big problem here would be the influx of city people...We get some 30,000 additional people here on weekends...In time of a national crisis we could get 100,000 fleeing the cities...Coming up here for safety."

That very real possibility has not been addressed by either of the two counties - where the question of civil defense remains as one of those programs you've got to have but don't really want to think about. Strelneck, already busy with law enforcement duties, said he is trying to reorganize the Mono civil defense program, but he said the program "has no budget at all."

He said that in Mono there are no approved bomb shelters that he knows of. If thousands of surviving panic-stricken Californians tried to seek shelter in Mono, there is no secured food or water supply or shelter for them.

Strelneck said that another genuine concern is earthquakes. He said that last fall and winter Mono experienced 4 or 5 quakes a week, all near the 3.5 scale of intensity.

As for weather disasters, schools in Mammoth and Lee Vining - and community buildings in June Lake and Bridgeport - offer some very temporary refuge. But as for a war situation? "It could really be a mess," said the Sheriff. He said there's a lot of paperwork involved too, that to get a full-scale civil defense program going, government reports must be filled out regularly. Strelneck is waiting to talk personally with a

state civil defense man, Gardner Davis, about the Mono program. He says funding is available and that's what Mono needs to start with. The Sheriff, who considers himself an interim director, said the state man is "overdue" in coming to Mono. Also working in Mono civil defense, or lack of it, is Mono Public Works Director, Wayne White. Along with Strelneck, White takes a hand in carrying out civil defense measures.

White said that revisions or improvements in Mono's plan are waiting on Davis for that state help.

He said Davis has "been busy with southern California floods" and is probably still "up to his hip pockets in flood damage."

In an atom war, its location makes Mono (and Inyo) relatively safe, but White as much as said that Mono has little if any civil defense program. He said, however, that he does have certain procedures to follow. When asked what would happen in Mono if a war situation occurred,

White said that he would begin "field alerts with communications...radio, fire personnel and county workers." He said that certain county workers would see that food stores were closed and guarded and that fire and medical personnel were mobilized.

But White admitted that until civil defense procedures are updated, specific plans don't really exist.

With some optimism White said that "man sometimes functions better under pressure. Although I don't rule out panic."

In most areas, civil defense is a low priority item. White called the Mono civil defense program "a step-child to other departments, not a funded program. We don't want to neglect it," he said, "it's something we'll address when we know what to do."

In Inyo County, Linda Hulsey serves as civil defense co-ordinator...She said the term "civil defense" is rarely used

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anymore, that the program more accurately should be referred to as a "disaster program."

Ms. Hulsey said the Number One consideration is that Inyo and Mono are located in "a low risk area," the primary concern being radioactivity, a presumed low grade of it.

What are our options? She said the best thing to do is "take cover," that radioactivity "decays with time". No really large community shelters exist in Inyo. The only one, capable of holding about 1,000 people, is the Bishop High School. But Hulsey does not seriously count on the high school for real protection, she advocates home shelters or mines as private shelters.

She said most people can in fact create a home shelter by insulating one room. As for those holding mining claims, take food and water and go there. Get underground.

Certain mines in the Death Valley area were designated as shelters years ago by the county, but they are not much to count on in an emergency.

Basements can be used as shelters, and also the crawl space under homes may be converted to shelters. Hardly solid comfort for two or three weeks, though.

Hulsey said that since Inyo would be anticipating fallout, not direct bombing, utilities may possibly remain on. She recommends storing water anyway.

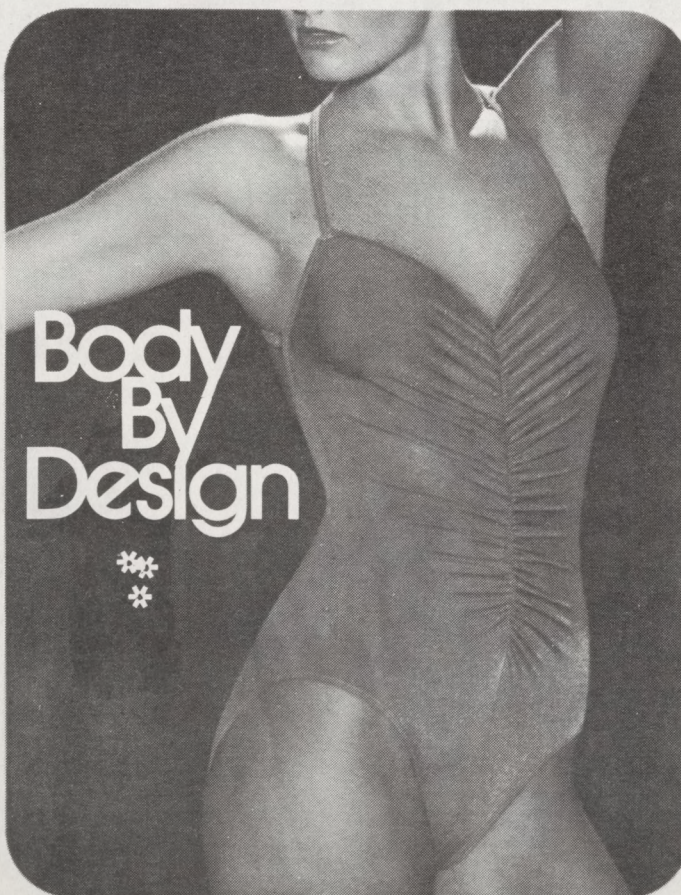
Inyo has no serious protection plan for a nuclear disaster. It remains with the individual to look after himself.

What the county does have is a communication system of sorts. If Ms. Hulsey gets word of a nuclear war, a warning goes out over the radio stations... Bishop's KIBS gets direct information from Sacramento on emergencies. And other information and warnings would be broadcast on KIOQ and KNYO.

Hulsey said Inyo also has a medical emergency communication system which could, on completion, link up towns throughout the county. Even serving as a link to Mono County.

So, what if thousands of Angelenos drive up Highway 395 seeking refuge? Ms. Hulsey believes Death Valley would be their main stop... But should they come farther, they would find no food or water set aside to help. Big trouble maybe, with people fighting for survival.

The coordinator advises keeping a three-week supply of food "available for any eventuality." She foresees an economic depression as a possible potential disaster in this area, as well



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as in the rest of the country, and she urges as much "self-sustaining practice" as possible. Hulsey said that if times get rough, if our food supply from down south or from Nevada were cut off, that grocery stores in Inyo would be closed; and guarded to prevent looting, which is a strong possibility under those conditions.

When asked what she thinks of civil defense in the U.S. and in Inyo, Hulsey said the federal government is "entertaining the idea of still more budget cuts for civil defense. When the U.S. already spends far less than any other country in the world on this kind of protection.

"Short-sighted planning" is what Hulsey calls it. Her own CD budget is around \$20,000 for the coming year, only partially funded by the federal government.

One aspect of disaster planning that Inyo appears to be ready for is flooding. At least, Hulsey and others have been meeting to talk about it.

At last report, Hulsey said that the snowpack is 180% of normal with more storms expected. She said officials from DWP, Forest Service, Inyo County, Southern California Edison, and Caltrans have met and talked about it. Now existing are flooding patterns, and there will be

pre-sandbagging. Areas of greatest concern are those around Bishop Creek's north and south forks and the by-pass.

And, still more on nuclear disasters: she said that there exists no known medicine to take for radiation sickness. Only time might heal, depending on dosage. She said that livestock may survive radiation although a first generation born might exhibit some deformities. Breeding after that should be completely normal, although animals may have temporary sterility.

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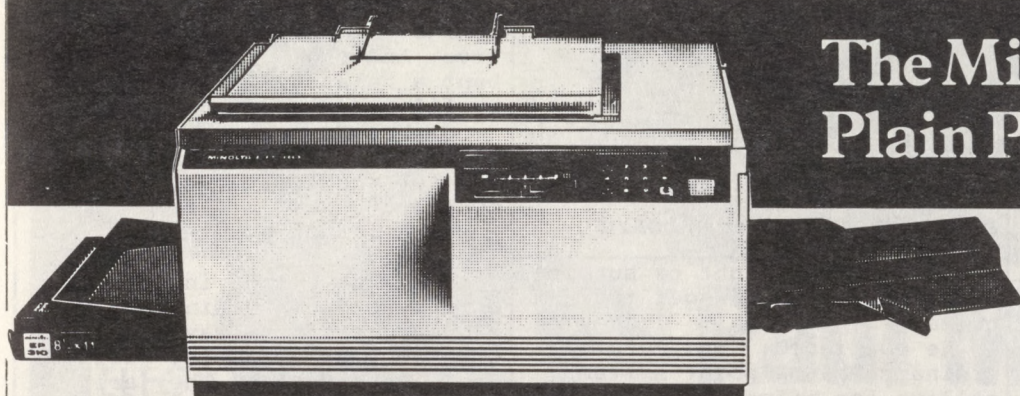
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ter the Petaluma example. In some areas they've come to have more than a few regrets.

The 5% growth and 600-unit plan was an altruist's dream, but according to a number of officials and private citizens at Petaluma it has become a realist's nightmare. For instance, a number of Petaluma officials and others say that although growth and housing are needed, even those construction plans allowed under the restrictive law have not been attained. Why? -Because of bureaucratic red-tape called for by the law. The Petaluma ordinance, upon which Inyo's limited growth supporters proudly based their own initiative, turned out to be more restrictive than intended.

Petaluma's mayor, Fred Mattei, talked to a reporter and complained about "red-tape." There were problems from the start "in every single phase of this thing planning, site design, the allocation committee. And what builders that are left say they've been held up as much as two years in getting any project through."

So the reporter contacted one of those builders. He promptly said he'd be happy to tell his story - but wanted anonymity. He was concerned "about reprisals from the city staff people." What has been the effect on housing there, he was asked.

"The initiative has driven housing prices up; there are too many rules and regulations. It has hurt business and it has put a lot of people out of business. And as far as affordable or low-cost housing is concerned the law has had an opposite effect."

The builder's opinion was supported by Charlie Carson, vice-president of the Builders Industrial Association of Northern California. "It's a paradox," said Carson. "Anytime you have a limited growth measure, it seems to do the opposite by raising housing prices. It's the law of supply and demand; there are fewer houses and they become more expensive."

"We've lost some builders. They either move or change jobs. And since there are fewer builders those that remain can raise prices." After the Petaluma initiative was passed, a few construction people took the matter to court, but they failed in overturning it. "Now we're trying to live with it. The city is trying to devise the mechanics to make it work; there are problems with the initial framework. At times, as many as a thousand applications



Initiative proponent
Pat Anderson before board

(for building) might be submitted, but only a few get the prize."

He continued: "The Petaluma ordinance has a point system calling for affordable housing (as has Inyo's proposed initiative), for construction of public facilities, and for good design for developments, among other things."

"The design (for instance) is now reviewed by a 17 individual boards made up of members of the public (The Inyo initiative calls for similar reviewing boards). They hold a very different view than that of professional builders. And most projects didn't earn 70 points (Inyo's initiative has a point system). Or the first phase of a project would be approved, but one or two years later the second phase might not be approved."

Carson said that a poll conducted by a San Francisco public

relations firm had found that "People in general are not opposed to moderate 'growth,' that it's just a vocal minority that wants control. Where people have been truly informed, they won't pass such initiatives."

Meanwhile, in another county - Santa Cruz - a university professor had made studies of Petaluma's initiative, its final effects in real application - and then went to other counties on a speaking tour warning people of the realities of growth limitation. His bottom-line thesis: It doesn't work, not at all, and it often creates results opposite to its intent. The professor is Manfred Shaffer, and in recent days presented his alarms before public gatherings in Oakhurst, California. Shaffer, too, referred to "small, superconservative minorities" who "scare the general public with warnings about urban blight. The fact is, it just doesn't happen that way."

Nowhere in its several out-of-county calls could Newsletter find anyone that supported - after experience - a "limited growth" initiative. So reporter Benett Kessler contacted Ward "Andy" Anderson, president of the Inyo Property Owners Association, the organization behind Inyo's proposed initiative. Anderson has recently kept a relatively low public profile.

Q: We haven't seen much of you...Are you still the spokesman for the limited growth movement?

A: A lot of people are...yes I am one.

Q: We have some information on the Petaluma ordinance. Many people over there say that the ordinance has crippled building with red-tape. They are apparently trying to simplify things...

A: Pat (his wife) was just over there. She talked to the Planning Director and he said there are no problems. They have already made some changes. They apparently had no exemptions in the original ordinance. Now I believe they are building at the rate allowed by the ordinance.

Q: Some in Petaluma, including the Mayor, say there are considerable delays of up to two years on projects because of the ordinance?

A: I'm not aware of that. But remember that the normal front time for a project is considerable already, with sewer permits, the planning commission, and the supervisors. I

haven't heard of any problems in Petaluma, but obviously there would be some time added on because of the ordinance. But the ordinance and the ordinance committee have actually saved time for the planning department staff...The committee selects those developments suitable for processing and the staff only reviews those approved...They don't have to deal with the others.

Q: You and others in your group have talked about a limited growth initiative providing "affordable housing." Many in Petaluma say that such an initiative produces the reverse... Expensive housing.

A: Expensive housing is the common trend in a lot of places. It may have happened in Petaluma.

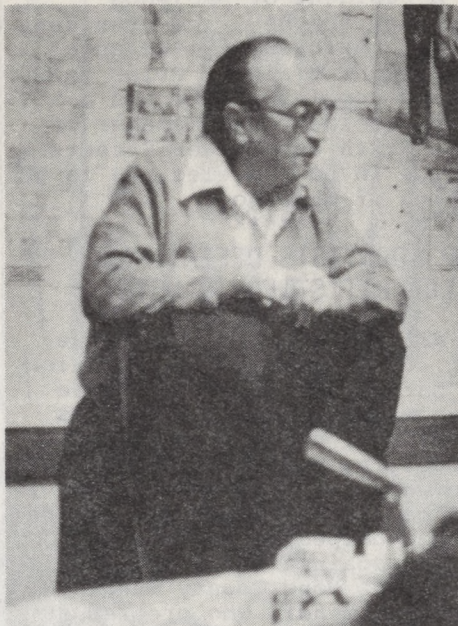
Q: Do you think the ordinance is the cause?

A: I don't necessarily think that it is. Developers are gravitating toward expensive housing. The initiative provides incentive toward affordable housing, but it doesn't guarantee that.

Q: How did you come up with a two percent growth rate which the initiative allows?

A: That's the average growth

rate between the years 1970-1977. We want to keep it at the



The supervisors hedged, so Chairman Johnny Johnson literally "vacated his chair" to make a motion opposing the initiative. His motion passed.

average. That's pretty liberal since the natural growth rate

is one-third percent...That's the birth rate minus the death rate. And the state average growth rate is close to two percent. But there will probably be little growth anyway with these high interest rates.

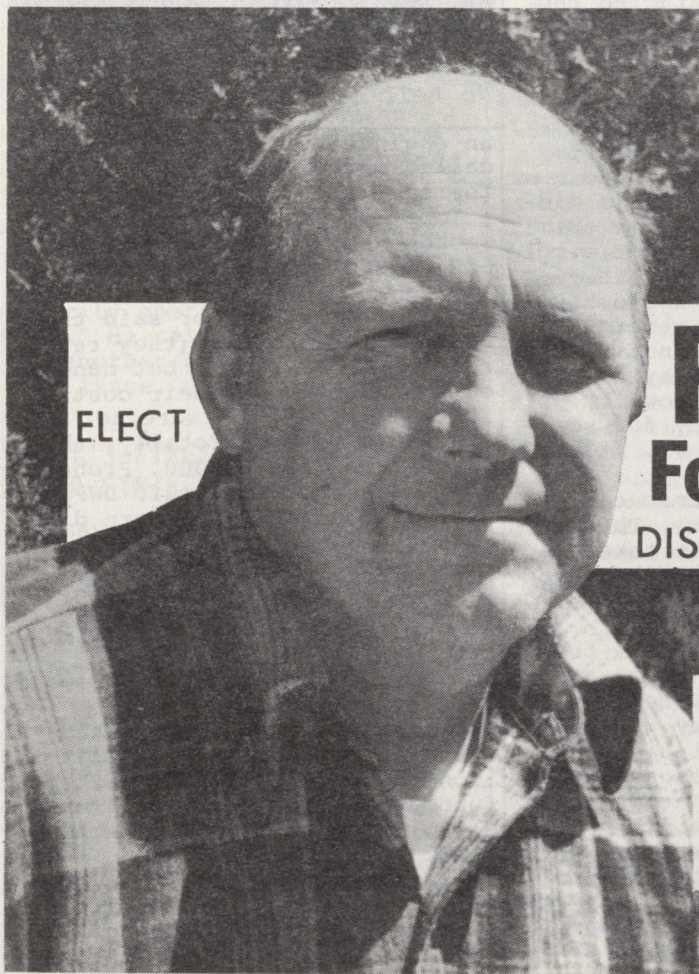
Q: Then why do you need an ordinance?

A: Well, that trend could turn around anytime...And we need protection.

Anderson added that if planning efforts had been better organized in the county and in Bishop, he would feel no need for an ordinance. But he said he feels that present county ordinances do not protect the area. He said that he, for one, does not see the Petaluma ordinance as a disaster, that it did what the people wanted: it slowed down a "cancerous growth" that was taking off like wild flowers.

He also commented that the "poor and working people are frozen out of the housing market...There's no place for people to live." Anderson's opponents would say that's exactly why they don't want a limited growth initiative, and Anderson himself says the initiative offers no guarantees.

What are the chances for



Paul M. Skinner
For Inyo Supervisor
DISTRICT 5

ELECT

Paul Skinner, a native of Inyo County, is a mining engineer and consultant.

"I am for intelligent, businesslike government that works toward the interests and protection of Owens Valley"

passage of the initiative in the voting booth? Anderson says he "feels good" about it, that it could be a close vote "but we have a good chance...There will be a heavy turnout for the primaries and for proposition 9."

A strong turnout? Probably. Already, several weeks before the election, there had been a record registration of voters. As for the initiatives "good chances," or even for its promised benefits, large numbers of Inyoans were expressing increasing doubts.

THINNES WILL BE SP'S INYO-MONO OVERSEER

When the Inyo-Mono National Bank merged with the Security Pacific National Bank chain late last month (See "Money Marriage," Page 20), the SP people created a new inland Division Administration regional office to oversee its banks in Mono, Inyo and parts of San Bernardino Counties. Soon afterward, SP announced from its Riverside office the promotion of Jerry Thinnes to a regional



SP Bank's Thinnes

In effect, Inyo-Mono boss

vice-presidency responsible for the new division. In effect, Thinnes becomes boss of Security Pacific's banks in Inyo and

Mono Counties.

A resident of Hacienda Heights, the new vice-president joined the bank in 1962 as a management trainee. Prior to the inland appointment he was a vice-president and manager of SP's Sixth and Flower Streets office in Los Angeles. He is a native of Chicago.

DWP LOBBYISTS DEFEAT MONO BILL; GET STIERN'S VOTE

WE'D LOVE to save the lake, but..." It was that conjunction - "but" - that irritated more than a few Mono Lake watchers as another piece of legislation protecting Mono Lake slipped by the wayside. And a state senator came under heavy local fire; he had helped to defeat the bill, voting against the home folks.

It was Mono County Senator, John Garamendi, who created SB 1617, one of hundreds of bills that had to be dispensed with in past days at the capitol. The Mono bill was heard in the senate's Agriculture and Water Resources Committee and it was defeated by a 7 to 1 vote. One of the seven opponents was none other than Inyo's Senator Walter Stiern. After hearing some Inyo complaints about Stiern's vote, the news Service contacted the senator at his Sacramento office.

He was defensive: "No was the vote of every one on the committee but one. Something is wrong with a bill that can't generate any support. I had been at work since 8 a.m. until midnight when this bill came up. I have no control over what people think, but I doubt that they know that this bill would have paid DWP out of the general fund for water they would not divert. And the bill didn't say how much. The estimate was unknown. People shouldn't have to pay for something they already own. It was a blank check.

"There are four tributaries that go into the lake. The DWP's water rights would be taken away with the bill and the state would pay for the water not taken.

"I had a lot of calls from the Farm Bureau and other agriculture interests. Water rights are a tradition; they were afraid of this legislation. And some of those parties testified at the hearing. As the Chairman of that committee said, 'you can't change basic water rights in a bill after midnight.'"

That magic midnight hour actually generated further fear, however, fear of the bill's turning more into lemon than

pumpkin. Stiern admitted that the chief concern was that no one wanted to make a major change in water law rights in SB 1617 while the issue remains a "question in legal courts."

It was suggested that some of this concern was generated by DWP itself. And the senator admitted that he had talked personally with a DWP lobbyist and



Inyo Senator Stiern

No help after midnight

an engineer. "The DWP lobbyist called on every single person on the committee..." He said that a lobbyist based permanently in Sacramento, a Mr. Corley, and DWP engineer Duane Georgeson talked to him for "about 15 minutes." The senator said they didn't pressure him (they're too smart for that), but handed him a sheet of their costs if the lake's water were not available to DWP. Totally, the figure was \$22,000,000. Probably another off-the-cuff DWP statistic, although Stiern did not say so.

Proponents of SB 1617 had come up with a different figure after water conservation and reclamation is taken into consideration, as it would have been.

Stiern was asked if he knew that the DWP donated \$44 million to the L.A. city reserve fund as a "gift" this past year. He said he had "heard something about that" in the hearing. But he said that "getting into the area of water rights is difficult...it's a sacred thing. That's been the fight with the City of Los Angeles and Inyo

LADY WITH AN AXE TO GRIND

With a smile sunny as a spring day, pretty Conservation Corps crew member Bernadette Cimins set about to grind some of her crew's axes. Bernadette is one of 14 women who respond along with the men to many of the county's fires, floods, or other disasters - and sometimes to public service works such as a recent renovation of an historic site at Independence, the "Commander's House." With the start of the fire season already underway (Page 14), the CC crews will need tools ready for use at any time.

Photo: John Heston

County for years..." Maybe that's why Inyo constituents calling the news service were so sensitive to the senator's "no." Some claimed Stiern "sold out" to DWP.

As for accusations that he "sold out," Stiern said, "that was the first time Mr. Corley had been here. I detest the way the city operates in Inyo and Mono." He said he expects to see another bill on the Mono Lake issue.

SCHAT'S FIRES TEENAGERS AFTER STRIKER COMPLAINT

JOBS ARE SCARCE IN INYO, a situation that exists for adults and especially for teens. They take them where they can get them. Parents and cops look for ways to get the kids off the streets. Schat's Bakery found a way: hire some youngsters. But in recent days Uncle Sam said no and moved in for a look at Schat's hiring policies; then a federal labor compliance officer ordered seven of Schat's teen-age employees off the job.

Dan Schat, the bakery's manager, said his shop "got a clean bill of health" after state investigators came in February, but he discovered that "federal

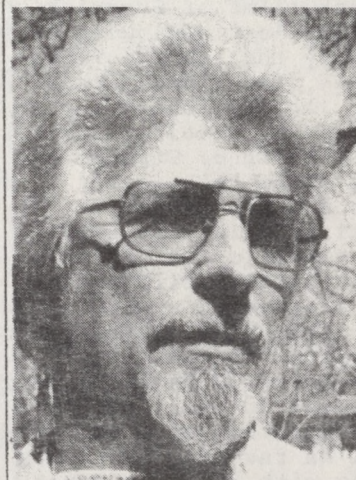
laws are different; I didn't know that." Schat referred to a child labor law which says that kids under 16 cannot work.

Depending on the motives of the employer, it is a law that is at once protective and harsh-preventing them from working in early-century sweatshops, but also discouraging the "work ethic" among teens, discouraging them from that ethic, as some say, "when they need it," and "need to learn it."

Schat pointed out that no fines or penalties are involved in the discharge of the youngsters. What prompted the sudden crackdown? "The federal man was contacted by the union," said Schat, "I'm very sad about this. It was a nice job for the kids and we were paying them above minimum wage - from three-fifty to four-twenty-five an hour."

The Schat's Bishop plant was recently torn by employee strife; the scene of an increasingly bitter unionizing effort on the part of the Los Angeles-headquartered Bakery and Confectionery Workers International Union. The union organizer, who established pickets at Schat's outlets several weeks ago, is Pete Peters. He said only that he "understood" that some kids

under 16 had been laid off. Meanwhile, his strike continues and Peters says the union plans to place more pickets before the



Calling
in the
feds

Pete
Peters,
Bakers
Union
Boss

The union became interested in the local bakery when it expanded its line of products into the supermarkets of the California southland.

"WORST" MOVIEMAKER PLANS A BETTER FILM IN INYO

LIKE MOST ARTISTS in the movie industry, Producer Ray Steckler has turned out a work or two he'd rather forget. When he arrived at Independence early

in April to plan a new film to be made here he hesitantly mumbled something about how some of his work would be featured on a national telecast, *NBC's Today Show* the following morning.... A dubious honor: Two of Steckler's films of the early '60's had been earlier nominated by the *Wall Street Journal* among five of the "worst films ever made." And now Gene Shallitt, the TV network's film and showbiz critic, would discuss that fact all over the country. Steckler, a guest of the news service, asked to be awakened early so he could view the disaster report on the news service television set.

But, at least, Steckler was right down there with the worst of them. Among the nominees as film history's "worst" were Burt Reynolds, and Raquel Welch, "the worst actress of the century." Also named was Frank Sinatra who appeared in a ridiculous flick called *Lady in Cement*. Also nominated (and also mentioned on a *CBS Evening News* broadcast that evening) was a film made with an entire cast of midgets in 1938, a miniature western in which the two- and three-foot cowboys swaggered, gun in hand, under the saloon's swinging doors. Richard Burton was also nominated for his disaster, *Exodus II*, in which the unconvincing story line provided more sense of horror than did the possessing entity.

And what films of Steckler's got the awfulest nominations? They went by the incredible titles of *The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed-up Zombies*. and *Rat-Fink-a-Boo-boo*. Strange indeed were those technicolor *Creatures* and *Rat-finks*.

So, will Steckler use Inyo County's villatic loveliness to create yet another film-land turkey? Not likely; he's gone on to better things. He's drafting his script around the mountain-desert background. He'll be here in the summer to start shooting - after completion of a documentary deal he recently concluded personally with Champion Boxer Mohammad Ali. Meanwhile, he contracted with Easter Sierra Printing's Patricia Duncan and Advertising Designer John Heston for printing/promotion for still another already-completed film. During a dinner party at Dean Knight's Knight Manor in Big Pine he assured the Inyoans: "They won't be listing this one among the best ever made - but it will be a long way from the worst."

End of the "goat story," at least for now

THE GOATS, won't be here. At least not right away....Some time back, the L.A. TIMES butted into the valley's peace reporting 4,200 wild goats would be air-lifted off San Clemente island and quoting an attorney for the Fund For Animals, reported that the creatures would soon reside in Inyo County.

With tule elk multiplying faster than they can be air-lifted out, the prospect of thousands of wild goats loose in Inyo pleased no one. Except, that is, the Fund For Animals group based safely away in New York. According to the group's president and founder, Cleveland Amory, Fund For Animals won a lawsuit against the Navy which expediently had planned to shoot the goats. The Navy uses the island for gunnery and bombing practice. Clearly, the goats would be under fire both there and here.

All a false alarm, at least for Inyo. Amory said that the goats will be air-lifted off San Clemente island and shipped to Kern County. Then they'll go to Carl Allen's ranch south of the Sequoia National Forest in that county.

That lets Inyo off the hook. Or does it? Amory said that teams of goats are planned for other areas "for devouring weeds and creating fire breaks". Inyo may be involved in that, thanks a lot. But Amory was fuzzy on that.

Meanwhile, the Kern ranchers are downright upset. They don't want wild goats escaping, eating up their alfalfa and running down property values. Well meaning New Yorkers are getting our goats in giving us theirs.

Mono supervisors delay Hanson attorney decision

THE MONO SUPERVISORS put it off again: That is, a decision on



Surviving a dubious honor, Movie Producer Steckler celebrates at Knight's Manor. With him: Dean Knight and Patricia Duncan.

whether the county should pay for Gene Hanson's attorney's fees. The board was expected to take up this issue again soon. The fees in question, of course, involve the grand jury accusations against Hanson. In that, there have been a few delays. The issue is now in the state appeals court, and the question is: Should Hanson have a preliminary hearing or not?

Cold feet and more -
but Ski Rabbit comes through

BUS PASSENGERS who formerly came near to suffering frostbite when dropped off in Mammoth in

early morning hours can now be warm and comfortable.

Greyhound used to leave passengers in front of the Mammoth Post Office where they were mostly stranded at 3 a.m. Now the owners of the Ski Rabbit Restaurant in the Mammoth Grand Motel have made arrangements with Greyhound to have the passengers left at the motel, with the Ski Rabbit offering 24 hour restaurant service. A greater incentive perhaps to "leave the driving to them."

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*The mayor
of Darwin*

Photo: Leah Camilucci



At 84, she is proud of her town's new museum which just opened. See Notes From B.K.

Notes from B.K.

WHY SHOULD INYO COUNTY go through all this red tape and trouble to get water! Why indeed. Our own officials needlessly (and often uselessly) make expensive trips to Los Angeles where they try to exact reason and a sense of fairness from the Department of Water and Power. As a last resort some people in Inyo have decided upon buying DWP's town water systems. They believe (naively, we think) mere town ownership would save us from metered rates and dead lawns. And our officials claim to be making some headway in their on-going talks with DWP. But when DWP people are contacted later they tell a different story from what the locals report. Nobody is sure what is happening. So who needs it anyway?

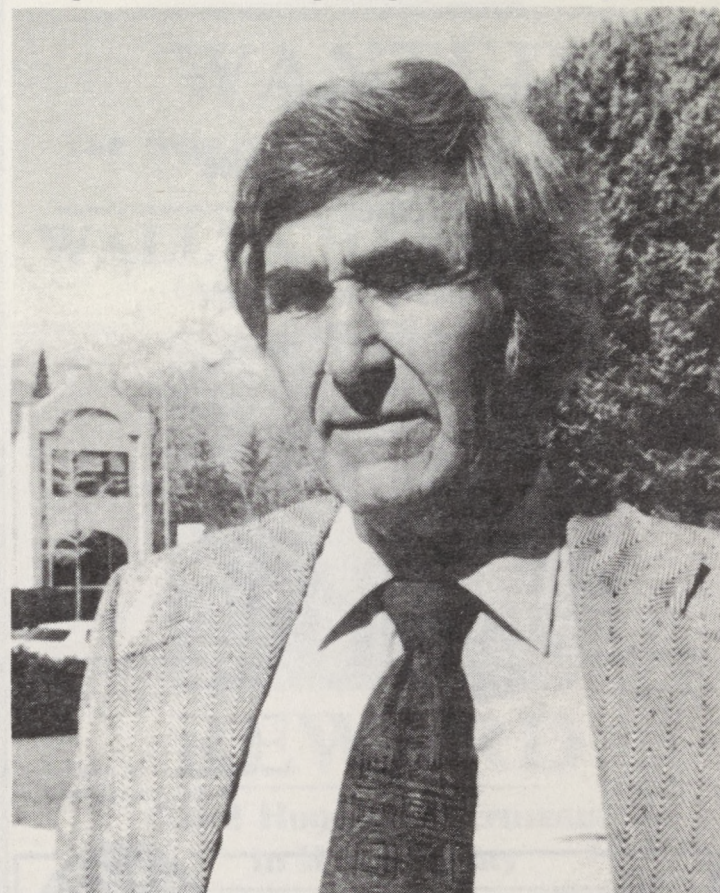
MY OPINION: DWP has the know-how to operate a water company (That at least we may grant them!). Now the question is how to get them to operate our water systems the way we want them operated and at a price that is fair. Bring them to heel, sort of, and turn the DWP bosses into our very own little slaveys working for us. Our view on utilities, bureaus, and governments: Let us be the masters, they the servants. Somehow in recent years this proper arrangement has been turned around, and all of us find ourselves working for all of them. Frankly, I like my servants to work hard and honestly, to be obedient and loyal and prompt, and to keep things orderly. For this I'm willing to pay well, and even throw in a little bonus or something when they're especially nice. That's where I want Jim and Duane, and Cy and Paul and all those other nice little dears - running our water companies for us.

AND OF COURSE WE WOULDN'T WANT them trotting off to L.A. for a party with their friends and spending a lot of our money and then billing us for the party. Like in the bus tour reported elsewhere in these pages. I think I'd prefer to keep the help at home working, with maybe Thursdays off, like with the maid. Then maybe this water issue would get back to the normal, natural order of things. Dear me, whatever has happened to the help these days! Really, though, we're talking about very good people at heart: Paul and Duane, and Cy and Jim and even Louie himself. Good people, just gone astray. Forgotten how to stay in their place. Don't worry. We'll fix that.

VERY PLEASANT PEOPLE DEPARTMENT: Honorary, or, as she suggests, "Ornery"? At 84, Frances Black is the mayor of Darwin community, a job she's held for 10 years. "They voted me in unanimously a long time ago. Nobody else wanted the job." She came to Darwin 29 years ago and has come to see clearly some of the town's needs: a grocery store because "you have to go eighty miles round trip to get a loaf of bread and a jug of milk." No grocery store turned up, but this month the town cel-

brated the opening of its new museum. And what are the town's issues? The big split between those who like the status quo and those who would like to see more growth. The battle started when somebody wanted to improve the water system. "There's no give on either side," she says. "A few more could come in without hurting the place." But she likes Darwin's "quiet," and its mountains; meanwhile, as mayor, she reigns supreme-and serene. Darwin's population stands now at 32. The remarkable photo over on the opposite page was taken by Leah Camilucci, a newcomer to photography, associated with Draco Foundation.

THAT GRIM-FACED FELLOW THERE ON THE RIGHT has always been one of my very favorite Very

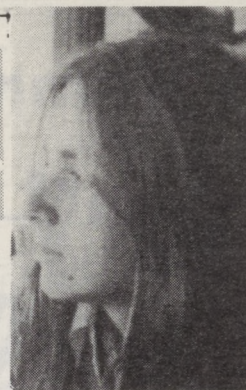


VPP John Hemler

B.K.'s "toughest competition" leaves KIBS

Pleasant People, not to mention my toughest radio competition. I used to work with him on the old KIOQ news when Roy Mayhugh owned the station. Then he went (taking a chunk of the audience with him) over to KIBS. He's one of

Continued next page



Benett Kessler

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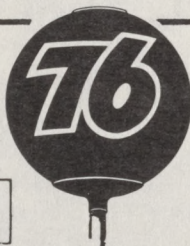
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BK's Notes Continued

the best newsmen in Owens Valley; been working at it for years. In case you don't know him (and nearly everybody does), he is John Hemler. We got word that he'd been fired from KIBS, and we later talked to him one day outside the courthouse where this picture was made. What happened? Well, our sources told us that Hemler was booted for one or both of two reasons (Take your pick, and take each with a grain of you-know-what): (1) He was fired because Jack McKinney had some money to put into the station and he had his own eye on the news spot, or (2) He was booted because he wasn't getting the news and had a tendency to interject opinion in what should be straight objective reporting. I'm not buying too much of any of that. It may be that Hemler and Station Manager John Young had kind of been drifting apart and simply came to a parting of the ways. For the record, Young told News-Letter Editor John Heston that "KIBS thought it was time for a change, a new approach to the news. We're making many changes: We've added Paul Harvey as a commentator and we've added ABC Network news on the hour for a whole new news package." What does Hemler have to say about it? Hemler goes with the Number (2) line, the

elegance...



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report about McKinney. It is a fact that McKinney is the new KIBS news anchor. Stay tuned.

AND DOWN SOUTH OF US radio is getting pretty lively, too. Lone Pine's KNYO has turned up with another VPP: Caroline Higuera, wife of KNYO's owner, Lloyd Higuera. Each week we sit together as news observers at a kind of pleasant circus, the board of supervisors' meeting. She's been quick to catch on to the ins and outs of news-gathering in Inyo County - and to the issues. Inyo radio is booming. In the past four years Inyo people have been exposed, perhaps for the first time, to real news that's believable. Competition? I love it, and so should you. What goes on in government, in the marketplace, in the courts, cannot ever be too much examined and publicized. If there's anything that quickly loses the public's respect it's a gutless reporter, an editor, or publisher that can't - or won't - report the hard news. No problem there with Caroline and KNYO.

SO LONG AS WE'RE TALKING MEDIA, we'll report on a news dropout now living in (and vastly enjoying) June Lake. He's our old KNXT Channel 2 Television assignments editor, Vance Scott. We ran into him the other late afternoon seated among the five o'clock crowd at mammoth's Cask n' Cleaver, a favorite watering spot for the after-ski crowd. And why did such a professional talent trade-off a top KNXT spot for the mountains? Vance said he, too, got fed up with Channel 2's editorial room politics and pressures.. Now that he's safely out of the TV news hassle he's hard at work as, would you believe, one of the area's top ski repair-

men! He'd become acquainted with the area as an incurable weekend skier.

HE DOESN'T LOOK IT, but he's a grandfather. He is VPP Dan Pool, the Bishop businessman.

BK's Notes Continued next page

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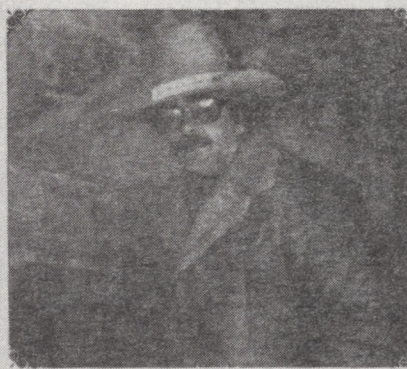


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• LIVE ENTERTAINMENT, WEEKENDS

Dan's (and Ms. Pool's) daughter Karen recently presented them with the new grandson at South Lake Tahoe. He is Shane Patrick McNulty. Mom and the new arrival are doing fine - and so are the proud grandparents.

ANOTHER NEW ARRIVAL with an Irish name: Scott Patrick Marc Duncan. Mom and Dad are Scott and Jennifer Duncan of Independence and they've waited through two long years to adopt the little blonde one who came to them just a few days after birth. (The bureaucracy of the adoption agencies is slow-moving and known to have long gestation periods.) Maybe we appreciate all the more those things we wait longer for. The whole town's extending its congratulations.

UNFORTUNATELY, SOME OF THE DWP WORKERS in the county's smaller communities are taking the brunt of the county's ire. Where was all the DWP brass when some of the meter men people we consider friends and neighbors - had to face up to (and doing it very well and patiently, we might add) those angry mobs of people with placards? The bosses, with whom the blame rests, were no doubt sweating it out safely at home (or in L.A. enjoying fat expense accounts wining and dining their cronies), and letting the working folk act as buffers. Some DWP employees noticed their absence when the crunch came. At least three DWP people (not the ones involved in the strike news) complained to the news service that a lot of their co-workers were also mad as hell about having to pay the rip-off water rates. (DWP has warned that employees who fail to pay the metered rates will have the amount deducted from their paychecks.) The employees are also griping about wages. This summer they'll be bargaining for a cost-of-living wage increase. With more than a little cynicism about DWP's wage policies they say they'll be lucky to get a 6% boost. And DWP boasts about giving the city treasury millions of dollars!

SOME DWP WORKERS IN MONO AND INYO have expressed concern about driving around in city trucks - and we are told that at least one of the top bosses in the valley rides only in an unmarked car; that's how serious the local tensions have become.

BIG DINNER PARTY AT KNIGHT MANOR: About 40 of the local contractors got together late in the month. "No business. No politics," said one, "just socializing." Vernon Bird and Chris Dodd dreamed up the idea and organized it. Did you know that contractors sometimes refer to themselves as "wood butchers"?

AT LEAST ONE MEMBER OF OUR CLERGY won't shy away from the Mono Lake issue: Father Christopher Kelley who is the vicar of Bishop's St. Timothy's Church, has forwarded a copy of a resolution passed by the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin. In so many words the report takes Los Angeles to task for failing to live up to religious-ethical standards in its Mono Lake policy: "The Judeo-Christian tradition clearly states that man is a part of God's Creation, and is responsible to God for the management of the Earth's resources. Our Catechism says, 'The world belongs to its Creator and...we are called to enjoy it and to care for it in accordance with God's purposes.' The statement goes on to label the Mono Lake

destruction as nothing less than a sin, and further calls attention to the commandment: "Thou shalt not covet." - "Robbing a part of God's Creation without consideration for his handiwork is clearly the sin of greed. It is a violation of the Tenth Commandment," says the diocesan press release. Thanks Father. The point is well made.

I WOULDN'T WANT TO EMBARRASS the good vicar, but I've just got to say that "Christopher Kelley" (What!? More Irishmen in our column!?) has just got to be one of the loveliest and most melodic names I ever heard! Add it to our list of VPP's, incidentally.

SO WHAT'S IN A NAME, or a trade or profession? Maybe a lot, or some of the candidates appear to think so. Look at it this way: There is a very good chance that Mono's incumbent Supervisor Gene Hanson will overcome the grand jury strikes against him and be returned to office. John Garner, the challenger for that seat and one of Hanson's accusers in the "conflict of interest" allegations, is another "employee of the Mountain." Okay, so what's wrong with that? Nothing, obviously. But it now looks like a number of voters in Chalfant, Long Valley and Benton won't go for another "Mountain employee" on the board. Hanson claims the support for his candidacy is strong in those districts. Probably true. Anyhow, a look down the list of candidates reveals that some of them seem edgy about stating their occupa-

tions if they happen to work for the Mountain organization, a fact noted in their qualifying statements for candidacy. Neither Garner nor Don Sharp mentioned the mountain in their entire resumes. E. L. Maner, another candidate, lists his occupation only as "businessman"; he had XXX'd out his first choice of "Real Estate Broker," and nowhere does he list his company, Mono Realty. Wally Charleston, newsman and columnist for this publication, listed only: "truck driver and writer." Well, I guess that's close enough.

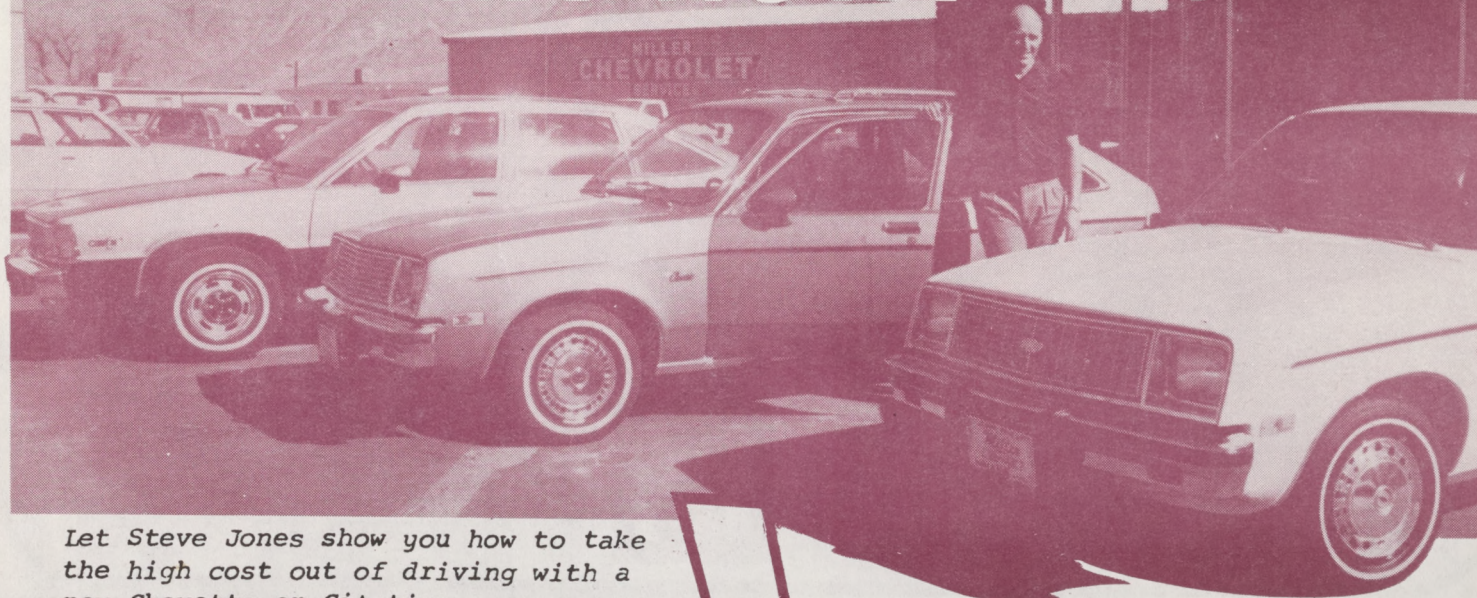
FIND OUT ELSEWHERE in this edition what happened when the people of a community voted in a growth-limiting initiative for their community. And then consider that Inyo's initiative is based almost entirely word for word on that same community's initiative. Then make up your mind all other issues aside, if you think we could handle it here. I had been looking for facts on the "growth" story, calling all over the central coast area, and I really couldn't believe what I was hearing; even some of the initiative's strongest supporters there are now having serious second thoughts. Bad news.

BUT MAY THE NEWS IN YOUR DAY BE GOOD NEWS EVERY DAY...

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WATCH OUT FOR 'CODE' WORDS

code name, a conventional word or name assigned to a secret agent, project, or assignment to avoid identification or detection by enemy intelligence:

code (kōd), *n., v., coded, coding*. — *n.* 1a a system of words, letters, figures, or other symbols, used to keep a message short or secret; system of secret writing: **b** a system of signals for sending messages.

Bureaucrats and politicians - and lots of just plain folks - have learned that they can make a bad situation look better, or a very acceptable situation look awful, by calling it something other than what it really is. These people acquired entire new vocabularies using words that intentionally distort or lie, or, worse yet, words that say nothing at all when something needs to be said; vocabularies in short that are self-serving, vocabularies full of "code" words. Euphemisms.

Now in Inyo County a new "code" word has appeared. It is

"LIMITED GROWTH"

In two surveys taken here the population expressed a majority view clearly favoring "limited growth." The surveys indicated the presence of a strong political base holding that view. But now another group, a very small minority that favors not "limited growth," but NO-growth, wants to make an appeal to that majority's votes, and so the NO-growth people have attempted to conceal their real intentions by telling people that they too support "limited growth."

But their actions reveal their real meaning to the term "limited growth." For instance, they go before boards and planning hearings and, so far, they have blocked every project to provide much-needed low-cost housing. Lately, the NO-growth types, still parading behind a banner of "limited growth," have even managed to stack some of those boards with their own super-conservative brand of "planners." Why do they do this? Because they already have substantial homes and (for now) secure jobs; now that they are safely "in," they want to close the gate on everybody else. They couldn't care less about older people, people on fixed incomes, and younger people with families - the working people.

Your own job, your own future home, seems now to be in their hands. Any kind of economic growth, including jobs and housing, is no longer just "limited," it is blocked. All this in the name - another use of "code" words - of "conserving the environment." Ask yourself this: When YOUR house or apartment was built, did it REALLY damage the "environment," or the "quality of life"?

The solution: The next time you're asked to sign a "limited growth" petition, or the next time you talk to a public official, or get stopped by one of these "limited growth" people, let them know that you are aware of their real intentions, that you know something about "code" words that they use to confuse you, and that you know something about plain English.

"Limited growth" in their terms means NO-growth. It is dangerous, placing all growth, all construction, all progress and county independence into a state of stagnation. It also makes any growth whatever the exclusive right of an elite and favored few. Don't be fooled: Watch out for "code" words.

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